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The Future of American Foreign Policy in the Persian Gulf: How the Study of Past Presidential Foreign Policies May Predict the Future

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How the study of past Presidential foreign policies may predict the future

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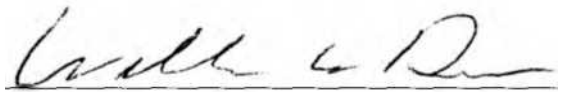

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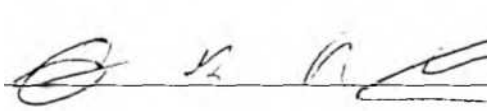

Van Heemst

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Chapter 1: Primary International Relations Theories

"A great deal of world politics is a fundamental struggle, but it is also a struggle that has to be waged intelligently."

– Zbigniew Brzezinski

U.S. foreign policy in the last century has left many people confused. Deciphering why particular presidents make decisions to go to war, to broker peace, and to funnel funds to illegal operations, or to topple rogue governments has kept political scientists busy for the past one hundred years. When further examined under the lens of international relations theories, specific events become even more unpredictable. The field remained relatively academic until the tragic events of September 11, 2011, which forever changed the perception that America had about its personal safety and national security. Many were shocked that the United States mainland was attacked without warning, illustrating just how naive the American public had become. The perpetrators were from an Arab nation that was a supposed ally, which only added to the surprise.

After the attacks, many observers felt compelled to understand how this could happen and what new place the United States had in the international community. For decades the United States was regarded as an almost untouchable superpower, but that changed in one day. One purpose of this thesis is to answer the following: How were the actions of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf region be changed by 9/11/2001?

The foreign policy of the United States has been a focus around the globe for the past one hundred years. After the atrocities of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson and other

policy makers were determined to create a new world order. Yet, even as the idea of collective security emerged, many realist minded people wondered if that was really the right strategy.

This thesis will argue that future U.S. foreign policy in the Persian Gulf will be neither realist nor idealist, but a combination of both. The thesis will reveal a trend through thirty three years of presidential administrations toward a more integrated approach of international relations. Future foreign policy will likely blend the idealist and realist positions, as well as the postmodernist approach.

I will begin by summarizing the idealist, realist, and postmodernist views of international relations. It is important to review the history behind each theory and the key arguments of each. The following chapters will then detail each president for the past thirty three years, analyzing his foreign policy initiatives in an attempt to categorize his approach. I will then demonstrate that U.S foreign policy has required more than either a realist or idealist approach; in practice, it has been a combination of both. This change was brought about by the end of the Cold War, the addition of non-state actors in international relations, and the horrors of the September 11, 2011, attacks.

The conflicts in the Persian Gulf will not be resolved anytime soon, and unfortunately, the approaches that have been employed so far have not worked well. Looking to the past in an effort to find a solution to new problems is the key to figuring out a positive foreign policy strategy.

This chapter will lay out the foundations of the primary international relations theories addressed in this thesis. The three theories that this paper will concentrate on are

Idealist, Realist and Postmodernist. Before we can assess where the future of US foreign policy is headed, we must first look at the theories that have been applied in recent history. To begin, I will explore the Idealist theory, also known as Wilsonian Idealism.

World War I was promoted as the war to end all wars; with countless men dead and so many more wounded, it was a very bitter experience for the United States and the rest of the world. The war marked the end of isolationism for the United States. It was also the moment for a so called new world order to emerge, and the architect of this new world order was Woodrow Wilson. Modern history witnessed a majority of the world powers at war with one another. It also ushered in a new era in technology and warfare that shocked the world with its horrors, creating much devastation and psychological trauma, and this also had an effect on Woodrow Wilson. This devastation was influential in President Wilson's determination to help create a lasting peace in the world. According to David Steigerwald, Wilsonian Idealism ". . . drew from America's common-sense tradition and defined the common good as the result of enlightened self-interest tempered by human reason."[1] President Wilson based his foreign policy on his trust in human reason, and the faith that rival countries could be unified under a human order. On January 8, 1918, Woodrow Wilson stood before both houses of Congress and outlined what needed to be done to create a lasting peace in the world. This speech was a defining moment for US foreign policy, because it outlined the concept of collective security which Wilson believed was the only way to prevent future conflicts. According to Walter Lippmann, "When prejudices against alliances encountered the desire to abolish war, the result

[1] David Steigerwald, *Wilsonian Idealism in America* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 11.

was the Wilsonian conception of collective security."[2] This belief prompted the President to give his historic speech to Congress entitled "The Fourteen Points Speech." In it Wilson outlined what he felt was necessary to create a lasting peace in Europe. It was also the beginning of the idea of the League of Nations.

Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points illustrated the idealist rhetoric that would forever be associated with it. Wilson's points prescribed a utopian world order. He asked Congress to support to his points so that he could take them to Europe to try and broker peace. The meaning behind the Fourteen Points is articulated best through his speech: "It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression." [3] Wilson then listed the Fourteen Points that he believed would make the world a better place and ensure that another war would not occur:

Point 1: There shall be no secret treaties and everything that is being negotiated will be done so within full public view.

Point 2: Absolute freedom of the seas and the right to navigate wherever one chooses.

Point 3: Free and fair trade among all nations that accept this peace treaty.

[2] Theodore P Greene, Norman Gordon Levin, eds. *Woodrow Wilson And The Paris Peace Conference*.(Lexington, Ma., : Heath, 1972)., 207.
[3] Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points of Peace": Joint Address to Congress (Speech, U.S. Congress, Washington, DC, January 8, 1918), The Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, http://www.woodrowwilson.org/library-archives/wilson-elibrary/ (accessed March 21, 2013).

Point 4: Guarantees that each nation will reduce its armaments to its lowest level except for their own protection.

Point 5: An adjustment of all colonial claims that will be fair and open-minded.

Point 6: There must an immediate evacuation of Russia and no matter what government is chosen to lead her, they must be accepted into the society of free nations.

Point 7: Belgium must be wholly restored and evacuated.

Point 8: All French territory shall be freed and the matter of Alsace-Lorraine needs to be settled.

Point 9: The borders of Italy shall be established according to nationality.

Point 10: Austria-Hungary shall be free to develop its own autonomy.

Point 11: Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated and restored.

Point 12: The borders of Turkey need to be secured and sovereignty assured.

Point 13: A Polish state should be erected, encompassing all territories that are inhabited by indisputably Polish populations.

Point 14: A congregation of nations shall be formed under specific covenants which will ensure that differences are addressed and resolved amongst all nations big and small before war breaks out. [4]

For Woodrow Wilson, these points would lead the world to a greater peace. "An evident principle runs through the whole programme I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one

[4] The Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, "Fourteen Points of Peace."

another, whether they be strong or weak."[5] He also planned to make the United States the leader in an armistice agreement with the Central Powers. After his speech to Congress, President Wilson knew that he would have to convince the public and the other Allied powers that his plan served the best interest of both the United States and the international community.

From the start, France was unhappy with Woodrow Wilson; in fact, George Clemenceau stated that "No diplomatic offensives, involving commitments as to war aims, were to be tolerated."[6] The French wanted to continue to prosecute the war and would not tolerate any interference by the international community. There was even some contention within the President's cabinet; Secretary of State Robert Lansing had reservations about the lack of interpretation of American war aims.

There was also disagreement among the Allies regarding Point 14, the President's plan to promote collective security. According to President Wilson, the only way to ensure any lasting peace was through collective security. Each country would have an equal voice in the event that some member country was being threatened or there was a dispute. Even though plans were being made to create a peaceful world order, the fact remained that no one had surrendered yet and these new plans were far from being ratified by the other Allied Powers. The real politicking began between October 29 and November 4, 1918, regarding Wilson's 14 Points. Edward House, popularly known as Colonel House, was President Wilson's foreign

[5] Ibid.
[6] George Bernard Noble, *Policies and Opinions at Paris, 1919;Wilsonian Diplomacy, the Versailles Peace, and French Public Opinion(*New York: Macmillan Co., 1936), 38.

policy advisor. During this time, House was charged with encouraging the Allies to accept Wilson's policies. Once Great Britain was assured that they would be taken under consideration regarding the "freedom of the seas" point, its resistance waned.

Colonel House was able to convince France and Italy to accept Wilson's policies only by suggesting that the President may be "compelled to resort to further open diplomacy."[7] Once these issues were worked through, Germany signed the Armistice on November 11, 1918. The allied countries also agreed upon the creation of the League of Nations during the treaty negotiations at Versailles. President Wilson believed that the League was the most important part of the peace settlement. One of the French stipulations to support the League was that it be permitted to maintain a military force, supplied by the member states, that would be big enough and strong enough to overcome any threat should arise. President Wilson argued that this would not be possible because no nation, the United States included, would give up control of its military; he responded that security would come primarily through disarmament of Germany. France ended up dropping their demand for an international military but did want a "permanent body in place to plan and prepare the military and naval program."[8] That proposal was also rejected by a majority of the Allies, much to the dismay of the French government.

There were many arguments and closed door discussions surrounding the League of Nations and what its primary responsibilities would be, but in the end the allies were able to add to the Treaty of Versailles the Covenants for the League. These covenants mirrored some of what President Wilson had outlined in his Fourteen Points speech, in particular Article 8

[7] Ibid., 57.
[8] Ibid., 117.

which states that the members of the League recognize that maintaining peace requires the reduction of national armaments consistent with national safety:

"The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments. Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years. After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council. The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety."[9]

This was a victory for Woodrow Wilson's foreign policy idea because reducing armaments would mean that there would be less need for a central authority to police the world. Nations would become less of a threat to each other if they possessed less weaponry. The other article that was beneficial to Wilson's foreign policy was Article 11 which stated:

"Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations.

[9] "The Covenant of the League of Nations." *Covenant Of The League Of Nations* (January 16, 2009): 1. *MasterFILE Premier, EBSCOhost(*accessed March 21, 2013).

In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends."[10]

This follows Woodrow Wilson's 14th Point, which provided for a general assembly for the purpose of mutual guarantees that freedom and independence would be protected for all countries. In other words, collective security would ensure that the nations of the world would be kept in check and that there would not be an opportunity for another world war to occur. Woodrow Wilson believed that by spreading democracy, even merely democratic principles through collective bargaining, the world would become a much safer place.

The Idealist theory that outlined Woodrow Wilson's foreign policy focuses not on the state alone, but on all of the actors in the international relations system. Idealists believe that they can forgo their own state's interest in favor of the good of entire international system. They strove to build an international community that would replace anarchy with international rules based on human values. Wilsonian Idealism also focused on the spread of democracy throughout the world to prevent further conflict, because democracies do not fight other democracies.

[10] Ibid.

Wilsonian Idealism was short-lived. The world soon faced the atrocities of another war. At the conclusion of World War II, another international relations theory emerged, one that would address the growing communist threat and power politics of the Cold War. Realist Theory was not really new, but an adaptation of a theory from ancient Greece. The theory has its origins in the writings of Thucydides. There was no one better than Thucydides to write about the terrible wars between Athens and Sparta. His account of these years is still credible today, making his one of the most studied works of history.

Thucydides was born in Thrace around 460 BC to a relatively wealthy family. He spent much of his youth in Athens where he was exposed to many philosophical views. Athens at this time had many great philosophers and tragic dramatists that influenced Thucydides. These included Aeschylus (d 456), Sophocles (d 406) and Euripides (d406). The most significant factor in Thucydides life was his exposure to the Sophists.[11] The Sophists were individuals that centered their arguments on man and his life in society. They criticized natural thinking, like cosmic justice. They saw things through a human perspective, not a natural one. Sophists believed in pure rationalism, so they subjected traditional morality and law to skeptical analysis and criticism. Thucydides wanted to write about the Peloponnesian War as it unfolded. He declared in the first paragraph of Book I: "Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war

[11] Perez Zagorin. Thucydides: An Introduction for the Common Reader. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005) 19.

[11] Thucydides. The History of the Peloponnesian War. Ed. Sir Richard Livingstone,(New York: Geoffrey Cumberlege Oxford University Press, 1943.) 33.

between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians; he began at the moment that it broke out, believing that it would be a great war, and more memorable than any that had preceded it."[12]

Thucydides was the first historian to write about a political war, which is what he believed it was: a political conflict between Sparta and Athens. While he has been compared to Herodotus, the father of history, Thucydides primary concern was the political aspect of history. His *History*, as it was called in later years (because Thucydides gave no title to his works) covers about twenty five years of the war. It is striking that he did not describe any sociology or economics, and he did not include the surrounding empires, such as Persia. He simply concentrated on the Athenians and the Spartans, and their allies. He did not comment on critical thinkers of the time or on the finances of either Athens or Sparta. Thucydides was only concerned about the behavior of nations and men in politics.

In Book One, Thucydides examined the origins of the Athenian empire. He briefly touched on the Delian League, explaining that after the war with Persia, the Athenians and the Peloponnesian League split into two sections, the Athenians and the Lacedaemon's. These two groups edged closer to war through their own quarrels and wars among their allies. Book One was very important to Thucydide's philosophy because it lays the ground work for what would later become known as political realism. It also offers a first person account of why the war happened and the human characteristics that created the situation for war.

Thucydides main argument is that the war was created by fear. "The real but unavowed cause I consider to have been the growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which it

inspired in Lacedaemon; this made war inevitable."[13] Athenian expansion was a threat to the Spartans, because the Spartans were traditionally the dominant society. They did not face competition from any other empires, except for those that they were at war with. Thucydides then explained how the Athenian empire came about after the Persian war. After the battles in Hellespont, the Spartans returned home, leaving the Athenians to tend to matters in the northern colonies. The Athenians then brought their wives and children there and began to rebuild the city, surrounding it with walls. The Spartans were shocked at this, and according to Thucydides, ". . . alarmed at the strength of the new Athenian navy, and the courage which Athens had shown in war. . . "[14] The Athenians smoothed over the rift with the Spartans, but they had been deceptive in their actions. They distracted the Spartans when they tried to investigate the building of the walls, which permitted the completion of the walls. The Athenians then explained that they needed to possess equal military strength or it would be impossible to contribute equally to the common interest. Even though the Spartans were annoyed that their wishes had not been met, they did not retaliate. According to Thucydides, this issue remained at the forefront of Spartan thinking. This is how the Athenians ascended to their supreme position at the head of the league.

In other chapters of Book I, Thucydides recalls the speeches made at the Congress of the Peloponnesian Confederacy in Lacedaemon. These speeches both supported and opposed the war. When the Spartans began their argument for war, they warned all Lacedaemons that the Athenian scourge was upon them, and that at any given time the Athenians could strike. In this

[13] Ibid.,36.
[14] Ibid., 48.

speech the Spartans did not want to wait around until that day came; they wanted to rally and attack Athens by invading Attica. The Athenians also wanted to be granted equal time to speak; they wanted to justify their empire. It was this rhetoric that solidified Thucydide's theory of Realpolitik. The Athenians used fear as a weapon, bringing up their win at Marathon against great odds. They argued, "we contributed three very useful elements – the largest number of ships, the ablest commander, and the most unhesitating patriotism." [15] Athens then added that without their support, the Persians would have simply run over the Peloponnesian League, and their support was the reason why they were entitled to their empire.

The most important element of this rhetoric was that fear was the Athenians' principle motivation in their quest to contain their empire. They also claimed that it was because of Spartan mistrust that they did not give up their empire. They also made that point: "It follows that it was not very wonderful, or contrary to the common practice of mankind, if we did accept an empire that was offered to us, and refused to give it up, under the pressure of three of the strongest motives, fear, honour and interest."[16] These speeches cut to the core of Thucydides argument that each society has desires which will always conflict with those of another. To prevent interference from other societies in this pursuit of desires, a nation must have power over them. Thucydides masterpiece, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, offered the world a firsthand account of the rhetoric that went into preventing or escalating war. The main theme of this work was that both sides were using a ruse of trying to prevent the war. This book was not just about the Peloponnesian Wars and the Athenian empire, it was about what moved

[15] Ibid., 62.
[16] Ibid.

humans to fight wars. Thucydides spent a good majority of his life living in war. Before the Peloponnesian war, there was the Persian War. Then after the Persian War, there were little skirmishes between the allies. His intent was to demonstrate that these things will always be as long as human nature remains the same.

World War II scarred men both physically and mentally. Another famous philosopher that sought to explain these atrocities was Hans Morgenthau. After observing the belligerent atrocities of the Nazis, he decided that a nation's actions could be predicted by applying a theory that involved human reasoning. "There exists an objective and universally valid truth about matters political," wrote Morgenthau. "This truth is accessible to human reason and . . . it is both embedded in, and pointed toward the ever changing configurations of successive periods in history."[17]

The Realist Theory that Morgenthau examined in *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* uses the human reasoning trait of Thucydides, but takes it a step further by infusing it with a "balance of power." He argued that this theory is concerned with the nature of politics, and that there are two schools of thought on the subject. The first believes that a rational and moral political order can be achieved in the present moment though universal abstract principles; the second argues that the world is driven by the forces of human nature.[18] The first school believes societal failures can be remedied through education and the sporadic use of force, while the second school believes that these failures can be remedied through balanced moral principles and universal checks and balances. So Morgenthau's

[17] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations; The Struggle For Power And Peace*. (New York: Knopf, 1962) preface.
[18] Ibid. ,3.

definition of realism consists of a concern with human nature within the historic events that take place. He offered his theory the *Six Principles of Political Realism,* explaining that it is his six fundamentals of realism that would clear up the misunderstanding of Political Realism.

The first principle states, "political realism believes that politics, like society in general is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature."[19] This is the point at which Morgenthau agrees with Thucydides; political actions are rooted in human nature, and to improve political understanding one must understand human nature. Realism then must be based on a rational theory centered around human nature and objective laws. The second principle, which is probably the most popular, states, "The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power."[20] Morgenthau argues that interest defined as power is what sets politics in its own sphere, separate from economics, ethics, or religion. Interest defined as power provides a rational reasoning for defining the actions of statesmen.

The third principle is that, "realism does not endow its key concept of interest defined as power with a meaning that is fixed once and for all."[21] In other words, interest defined as power can have its meaning changed due to historical aspects or culture. Power may be defined differently from one culture to another. He also argued that the identity of interest may not always be what drives a wedge between states, but may be what pulls them together. According to Thucydides, "identity of interest is the surest of bonds whether between states or

[19] Ibid. ,4.
[20] Ibid., 5.
[21] Ibid., 8.

individuals."[22] The fourth principle states, "political realism is aware of the moral significance of political action. It is also aware of the ineluctable tension between the moral command and the requirements of a successful political action."[23] In this principle, Morgenthau declared that individuals and states must judge their political actions by universal moral principles. The individual has the right to sacrifice, while the state does not. Also, there can be no political morality without weighing the consequences of political moral actions; if there is an alternative, the (R. Jarvis 1984)n the state must take it under advisement before any action is taken.

The fifth principle is, "political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe."[24] A state must distinguish between a principle that is the truth and that which is idolatry. Nations cannot know if God is on their side; therefore, the argument that their power comes from God is purely unethical. Morgenthau also argued that applying the concept of interest defined in terms of power keeps other nations from moral excess. All nations can judge each other as they would judge themselves, thereby forcing them to pursue policies that respect the interest of other nations, while protecting their own. The sixth and final principle states that, "the difference, then, between political realism and other schools of thought is real and it is profound . . . there is no gainsaying its distinctive intellectual and moral attitude to matters political."[25] Realist Theory provides politics its own sphere in society and asks the question: how does this policy affect the power of the nation? It does not take into consideration other spheres because they have no

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 10.
[24] Ibid., 11.
[25] Ibid.,11.

effect on interest defined as power. If other spheres are taken into consideration, then the view is not part of the realist theory.

Political Realist Theory relies on the concept of interest defined as power. Its main focus is on the state, and non-governmental organizations are secondary to the state. Realists also tend to see the international community in a constant struggle for power, in which some states gain power, while other states lose it.

Hans Morgenthau changed the face of international relations by forcing states to acknowledge that the primary motivator in a conflict is power. Morgenthau based his views on international history, not on theory alone. He detected a pattern, which was that many of the major conflicts were due to interest defined as power.

In the modern era there have been many variables that have served to revise the realist perspective, the first being nuclear weaponry. Robert Jarvis writes, "Because they render meaningful military victory impossible, nuclear weapons fundamentally alter the traditional relationship between force and foreign policy."[26] This, and the addition of non-state actors, has given rise to questions regarding the credibility of political realism in the future. A new political theory has emerged, coupling with it the ideas of postmodernism and international relations. Theorists are again trying to explain why states act the way they do, but in different terms, sometimes known as the Third Debate. (Cochran 1995)

[26] Robert Jarvis, "Hans Morgenthau, Realism, and the Scientific Study of International Politics," *Social Research*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (Winter, 1984): 862.

Just like Postmodernism, it is hard to find the genesis for the Third Debate. It seems that the Third Debate was developed as a response to the ideas of Realism and Neo Realism. For many years, realist ideas fueled international relations; it was the mainstay for explaining why countries reacted to each other the way that they did. The idealism of the League of Nations collapsed with the rise of the Nazis, prompting theorists to devise a better way for countries to coexist. Scholars then promoted the idea of realism, which argued that the sovereign state would control international relations; it is the power of the sovereign state that would keep each country in check. Postmodernism counters that the dominant understanding of international relations as a world of sovereign states is flawed. "Sovereignty and the dichotomies are a mechanism of domination and closure which limit the play of political practice." [27] Sovereign states create an atmosphere of unrelenting power which controls what people do and what people think, according to Molly Cochran. This limits the ability to create new political practices that may be a better fit for the new millennium than the old realist ways of thinking.

For the new postmodernist thinkers, the sovereign state was simply created by modernity to fill the void after the decline of religion. Cochran explains that the "Collapse of the Church and the dynastic empire in early modern Europe unleashed a crisis of identity and representation."[28] The need to fill the secular void led to the powerful sovereign state that people looked to for guidance and for boundaries. A fear of anarchy established the boundaries for the sovereign state as well. Postmodern Theorists believe, however, that the

[27] Molly Cochran, "Postmodernism, Ethics and International political theory" *Review of International Studies,* (1995 21): 237.

[28] Ibid., 239-40.

sovereign state will always be present in the international relations debate. That said, in the new millennium the sovereign state is becoming weaker. According to Cochran, "the state cannot maintain its hold upon history of universal truths as the acceleration of time erases notions of lasting structures, fixed criteria or assured meanings."[29] Postmodernism dictates that there are no fixed boundaries, and that there is no definition of truth; it argues that the structures that have been in place, especially in regards to international relations, were really a false truth for society. As time passes, the meaning of these truths will be erased and everything that these sovereign states presented as being true will have no meaning at all. The reason for the emphasis on the non-fixed boundary is the fact that in the postmodern era, non-state actors have to be taken into account. "In acknowledging the role of the non-state actor in international relations, the discipline loosens its hold upon claims for the sovereign state." [30] The addition of non-state actors breaks down the power politics of the sovereign state, which makes any claims to authority ambiguous.

It is this change in the new millennium that frightens many sovereign states and creates an air of violence as these states struggle to maintain control. According to William Connolly, the increase in violence is a ". . . response to the gap between the globalization of contingency and the states self-sufficiency." This has ushered in a new alternative practice: the postmodernist politics of resistance.[31] There are two aspects of this politics. The first is opposing any practices which claim authority of its citizens. This involves changing the way that sovereign states interact with their citizens, resisting use of the iron hand of authority. The

[29] Ibid., 241.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., 242.

second promotes democratic pluralism, which would encourage new ways of thinking in a world shaped by postmodernism. It would allow new ideas; new ways for countries to interact that would not include dominance and violence. Another issue is the role of the individual in relation to the state. Postmodernists reject the notion of a person as a subject. This has led to a debate between the communitarian and the cosmopolitan theories. In the communitarian theory, the individual is subject to the social matrix and as such is a part of the social fabric of society. In the cosmopolitan theory, the person has freedom of choice; he can choose his own social attachments. According to R. B. J. Walker, ". . . the most interesting ways forward will be opened up by those who seek to speak the possibility of new forms of political community while resisting the prior resolutions."[32] It is imperative that for this new postmodernist political theory to work one cannot go back to the resolutions of the sovereign nation to silence and dominate through violence. A final aspect of postmodernism in international relation is the Third Debate. The Third Debate is the conflict between rationalism and reflectivism. A new theory of constructivism is the supposed bridge between the theory of rationalism and reflectivism.

The main point of contention between rationalism and reflectivism is the distinction between the natural and social sciences. Rationalism appeals to reason as a source of knowledge, which means that truth is completely intellectual. This theory looks within a person's mind, rather than to what is influencing him from the outside. Reflectivism opposes realism, especially positivism, and emphasizes the interpretation of events rather than data. It

[32] Ibid.,248.

also acknowledges that the material world exists outside of the mind and argues that the world cannot be known without our interference.[33]

These theories clashed for many years. Then in 1989 Robert Keohane juxtaposed rationalism to reflectivism and suggested that there could be a synthesis between the two. The middle ground that he discovered is called Constructivism. The crux of the Third Debate is the relationship between the ontological and the epistemological. In the discovery of middle ground between rationalism and reflectivism, all agreed that positivism had to be included in any theory.

Positivism is a philosophy of science that uses social and natural science data as the only source for knowledge. The man who set the tone for the constructivist theory was Alexander Wendt. "In some sense this [strong belief in science] puts me in the middle of the Third Debate, not because I want to find an eclectic epistemology, which I do not, but because I do not think an idealist ontology implies a post-positivist epistemology. Rather than reduce ontological differences to epistemological ones, in my view the latter should be seen as a third, independent axis of the debate."[34]

For many though, Constructivism does not represent the Third Debate, but only changes the debate between rationalism and constructivism. Tanja E. Aalberts and Rens van Munster "rebut and argue instead that it in fact constitutes an erroneous demarcation with regard to substance and science, as a result of which constructivism has not fully lived up to its promise

[33] Tanja E. Aalberts, Rens van Munster, "From Wendt to Kuhn: Reviving the 'Third Debate' in International Relations (D. Jarvis 2000)", *International Politics* (2008) No. 45, 724. (Aalbers and van Munster 2008)

[34] Ibid.

to provide a viable via media."[35] These two authors argue that claiming a belief in positivism and bracketing it with epistemology eliminates constructivism as a middle ground. This belief becomes a contradiction in terms by holding on to the positivist epistemology, narrowing its definition, and also giving it an unstable position on its own terms.

According to Aalberts and van Munster, the only way to remedy this is to refocus the debate on methodology and epistemology. They cite Patomaki and Wight in their new theory of constructivism: "In summary the critical realist 'problem-field' we advocate can be said to be committed to ontological realism (that there is a reality, which is differentiated, structured and layered, and independent of mind), epistemological relativism (that all beliefs are socially produced and hence potentially fallible), and judgmental rationalism (that despite epistemological relativism, it is still possible, in principle, to provide justifiable grounds for preferring one theory over another)."[36] While Aalberts and van Munster agree with part of this statement, they suggested that one cannot reduce reflectivism to anti-realism; it is the wrong assumption and categorizes it with idealism. Their argument has been that the Constructivist theory is invalid and that there needs to be another avenue to the Third Debate. They argue that using reflectivism makes it impossible to establish any knowledge claims. The authors conclude: "It argued for an engaged pluralism, entailing the view that warranted knowledge claims can only be made if scientists are willing to engage in a dialogue about standards of scientific arguments." [37]

[35] Ibid.,727.
[36] Ibid., 731.
[37] Ibid., 738.
[38] D.S.L. Jarvis, *International Relations And The Challenge Of Postmodernism: Defending The Discipline*, (Columbia : University Of South Carolina Press, 2000), XI.

Darryl S.L. Jarvis rebukes the claim of the Third Debate. In *International Relations and the Challenge of Postmodernism*, he argues that "if the Third Debate were meant to bring clarity to a discipline otherwise congested with new approaches, issues areas and perspectives, then it has surely failed."[38] For Jarvis, the Third Debate has been a catch all of theories in which people have an "ax to grind" in the field of international relations. He believes that it began with the death of realism, or at least the failure and inability of realism to explain global phenomenon. For some, the Third Debate is there to help explain globalization and the death of the nation state; to others, it explains theories and knowledge development as discussed above. Jarvis believes that the field of international relations has been bogged down by epistemological debate and that its foundations are cracking under the weight.[39]

In his critique of the Third Debate he also takes to task the field of international relations itself and criticizes the fact that in the last thirty years it has had a tendency towards metaphysical reflection and epistemological investigation. Gone are the days when the field could be considered a science in which wars and relations between states were be studied in a scientific manner. According to Jarvis, "the discipline is at a major crossroads, caught within an intellectual malaise such that there is no longer any clear sense of what the discipline is about, what its core concepts are, what methodology should be, what issues and central questions it should be addressing."[40] This is the crux of Jarvis' argument: international relations today is caught in a web of epistemology, moving in circles and never reaching a conclusion.

[39] Ibid.,43.
[40] Ibid.,45.

The advent of postmodernism has shaken international relations and has forced researchers to question the basis on which its theories were founded. Jarvis also argues that the Third Debate "lacks a central theoretical matrix,"[41] While Jarvis does make some interesting points about the Third Debate, it is clear that he dislikes postmodernist theory. He describes Postmodernists theory as an "intellectual maelstrom" with nomenclature that is confusing, fluid and imprecise. Jarvis is very good at presenting the effects that postmodernism has had on the field of international relations. He offers a critique of the Third Debate, and it seems that he is more of a realist than a postmodernist. That would seem to be the problem with postmodernist theory: there is no real definitive answer to explain the boundaries of international relations. The purpose of this chapter, however, is not to argue the theories themselves but merely offer a brief definition of each. I will now turn my attention to the United States Presidents, from Ronald Reagan through Barak Obama, in an effort to discover which theory each employed when forming his foreign policy.

[41] Ibid.,46.

Chapter 2: Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush

In the previous chapter I described the three primary theories of international relations that have dominated the study of American foreign policy. This chapter will examine the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush and analyze which international relations theory would best apply to each president's foreign policy. This paper will treat the foreign policy of each president, focusing on the Persian Gulf Region.

Ronald Reagan took the oath of office as the 40th President of the United States on January 20, 1981. Prior to his inauguration, the United States had been struggling both economically and militarily; funding for the military had been decreased and inflation was high. The end of Jimmy Carter's term as the 39th President was tumultuous for several reasons. The United States had seen inflation rise steadily, the middle class was highly taxed and American citizens were being held hostage in Iran. People had become disillusioned with high unemployment rates and gas shortages. The Carter presidency was also crippled by the Iranian Hostage crisis. For 444 days, Iran held more than 60 Americans hostage while President Carter tried to negotiate their release. The many failed attempts to retrieve the hostages only solidified Carter's growing number of detractors.

Carter's foreign policy was primarily centered on containing communist advancement in third world countries, stifling the procurement of weapons between the two superpowers and preserving the détente that had been in place for many decades. Détente was designed to relax the tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union through negation of treaties.

As Ronald Reagan was literally taking the oath of office, the hostage crisis ended when Iran decided to release the American hostages that had been held for the last years of the Carter presidency. In his inaugural address Reagan began to formulate the foreign policy that would endure throughout his presidency: those who were our allies could count on our support, yet those who were our adversaries would not prevail. There was one part of his address that would predict his upcoming foreign policy: "We will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope for those who do not now have freedom." [1] This would put the United States on the map as a unitary actor in international relations. Whomever the U.S. believed was against them would be worse for it, giving them an authoritative stance.

Ronald Reagan had come into the presidency prepared to deal with the poor state of the economy. He did not, however, begin his presidency with a detailed strategy for his foreign policy; that would take another four years to come to fruition. The reason for the slow start was that dealing with the lagging economy was more critical to the United States than formulating a foreign policy. He had campaigned on the need to get people back to work and to reduce the rate of inflation. But there was an ulterior motive as well: Reagan wanted to reverse the long period of détente by building up the US defense.

Reagan had proclaimed after his election that he would pursue peace through strength, but this type of policy was hard to sell even to his own party. Many wanted to retain the stability of arms negotiations while hoping that the U.S. could meet the Soviet Union in the middle. The American public was suffering from the "Vietnam Syndrome" in that it was

[1] Sean Wilentz. *The Age Of Reagan: A History, 1974-2008*, (New York, NY : Harper, 2008), 10.

nervous about asserting American power because of lingering self-doubt.[2] There was doubt about America's military capacity and influence in the world. Ronald Reagan saw the problem as an exhaustion of the post-Vietnam era, coupled with the vicious rhetoric of the liberal left that gave the public pause when it came to a different approach to foreign policy. Reagan wanted to do more than return to an anti-communist foreign policy. He wanted to win the Cold War, rejecting the notion of coexistence with the Soviets and asserting that containment was a losing strategy. He quipped, "Détente- isn't that what a farmer has with his turkey – until Thanksgiving Day?"[3] Again, President Reagan was promoting the unitary ideology of his foreign policy. The U.S. would see that its own interests were protected through unilateral decision making versus the negotiations of the Détente.

While there was ongoing debate in the West about whether or not the Soviet state would survive, the Soviets themselves had been on the move expanding their territories. Soviet expansion began in the 1960s under the new Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Brezhnev's government helped fledgling socialist groups in various third world countries begin the process of taking over their governments by supporting them with finances and weaponry. Some of these countries were in Africa, like Guinea, Somalia, Sudan, Libya and the Congo. Others were in Latin America, for example, Chile, Grenada and Nicaragua. One of the Soviet Union's boldest moves was the invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

The Soviet-Afghanistan war began in 1978, when the communist factions within Afghanistan staged a coup and overthrew the government of the Republic of Afghanistan.

[2] Steven F. Hayward, *The Age of Reagan. The Conservative Counterrevolution, 1980-1989*, 1st ed.,(New York, Three Rivers Press, 2009), 104
[3] Ibid., 103

When the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) gained control, they imposed socialist laws which many Muslims saw as a threat to Islam. In 1979 the PDPA requested help from the Soviet Union to quell the fighting that had broken out with the mujahedeen rebels. The Soviet Union sent tanks and troops to Afghanistan to support the government, and by 1981 the Soviets had deployed 80,000 combat troops.[4] This war, for the Soviets, would resemble America's Vietnam; every battle that the Soviets would win, they would lose again days or months later. The rebels fought fiercely and were well supplied with weapons. This scenario played out for the entirety of the war, and the Soviets had a hard time escaping it.

While the United States concerned itself with Soviet containment, a new global dispute was commencing: the Iran – Iraq war. In September 1980, Iraq decided to invade Iran, partially from fear, but mostly because of opportunism. This crisis was the first for the Reagan presidency, and until 1981 the United States remained neutral in this war, hoping both sides would suffer. The United States did not favor a win for either country, because it harbored hostilities toward Iran for the hostage crisis and caution toward Iraq due to its communist ties.

By 1982, it began to look as though Iran would win the war, which caused anxiety in the Reagan administration, forcing it to back Iraq and tip the war. In February 1982, Iraq was removed from the administration's list of state sponsored terrorists, which allowed the US to begin passing along satellite images of Iran to Iraq and American arms to be transported to Iraq

[4] Ibid., 100

via Jordan and Kuwait.[5] In December 1983 the US launched Operation Staunch, which imposed sanctions against Iran and stopped any arms transfers to that country.

Ronald Reagan was elected on the promise that he would fix the US economy and create new jobs. His lack of foreign policy or even the discussion of it was making headlines in the major newspapers. *The New York Times* foreign affairs columnist Anthony Lewis critized: "In 100 days the Reagan Administration has set a record for confusion and contradiction in foreign policy."[6] His plan had always been to roll back the influence that the Soviets had on smaller countries and completely abandon the idea of containment. Yet in 1983 the President signed the National Security Decision Directive 75 which designated the manner in which the Soviets would be treated and the process to be used for any foreign affairs.

This directive was primarily focused on reversing Soviet expansion. Reagan wanted to accomplish this by increasing the US military and thereby balancing the overall military disproportion. In geographical regions of concern, the U.S. would promote a process of change within the Soviet Union and engage the Soviet Union in negotiations to attempt to reach agreements which would protect and enhance US interest.[7] The administration wanted to send a message to Moscow that any unacceptable behavior would incur costs that outweighed any gains. The US military had been diminished under the Carter administration, leaving President Reagan concerned that the country would be ill prepared if the Soviets ever threatened US borders.

[5] Steven A. Yetiv, *The Absence of Grand Strategy: The United States in the Persian Gulf 1972-2005*,(Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 2008), 51.
[6] Hayward, 99
[7] Ronald Reagan, "National Security Decision Directives: The Reagan Administration", (updated October 9, 2012) http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd, (accessed April 16, 2013)

Reagan's next order was to modernize the US military force by upgrading all of its nuclear and conventional weaponry. He also wanted to send a message to the Soviets that the US would never take second place, and that U.S. forces would be strong enough to counter any measure. "Underlying the full range of US and western policies must be a strong military guided by a well-conceived political and military strategy."[8] Reagan's directive bolstered long term growth in U.S. defense spending and capabilities, both nuclear and conventional, creating the biggest arms race the US has ever experienced, with spending levels that reached into the billions of dollars.

One of the most significant parts of NSDD 75 was the outlining of political action towards the Soviet Union. "US policy must have an ideological thrust which clearly affirms the superiority of US and western values of individual dignity and freedom, free press, free trade unions, free enterprise and political democracy over the repressive features of the Soviets."[9] This political strategy would become his guide for the next five years. It would also reverse the SALT II agreement that Jimmy Carter had negotiated in 1979.

This is the policy that Reagan had wanted to pursue even before his election; he wanted to break from the détente that had been in place for decades and assert American superiority. He did not want to simply appease the Soviets; he wanted to beat them in the Cold War. He outlined in his directive that the United States would help third world countries resisted Soviet occupation. This would be achieved by giving them security assistance, which in turn promoted foreign military sales, which put our military at readiness to help to protect vital interests and

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

to support endangered allies and friends. This would become the central idea of the Reagan Doctrine.

Ronald Reagan's foreign policy was unveiled in his State of the Union address in February 1985. In the speech, Reagan declared that anti-communist resistance movements deserved U.S. support. This foreign policy idea was labeled the Reagan Doctrine in the April 1, 1985 issue, of *Time* magazine.

In *The Reagan Imprint*, John Arguilla writes, "the Reagan Doctrine . . . is yet another remarkably creative approach to modern statecraft."[10] It rejected the notion that the US Cold War strategy had to be confined to the defensive, and it allowed for American arms to be shipped to other countries, giving these countries a greater ability to fight communists. Reagan also wanted to develop an information strategy to be used when guerrilla warfare undesirable. This was successful in Poland where he helped the Solidarity movement stay alive. These policies were a major departure from the indecisive practices of the Carter administration.

The Reagan administration faced a setback when Congress passed the Boland Amendment, which demanded that no money or help be sent to the Contra rebels resisting the communist Nicaraguan government. An elaborate plan was devised in 1985 when Iran made a secret request to buy weapons from the United States. Ronald Reagan's National Security Advisor, Robert McFarlane, came to Reagan seeking approval in spite of the embargo against selling arms to Iran. Reagan hoped that he could use this as leverage to secure the release of seven American hostages who were being held in Beirut, Lebanon, by Muslim radicals. The

[10] John Arquilla, *The Reagan Imprint: Ideas in American Foreign Policy from the Collapse of Communism to the War on Terror,* (Chicago, (Arqulla 2006) Ivan R Dee, 2006), 216.

administration was having a difficult time securing the hostages release, so it seemed their only hope was in some sort of arms deal. Reagan authorized McFarlane to make contact with the Iranian government. Modifications to the plan were implemented by Oliver North, who then began to divert a portion of the proceeds to the Contras to aid in their fight against the Sandinistas.[11]

Israel had always been pro-Iranian in the Iran-Iraq war, so it became a willing partner in this plan. Israel would ship weapons to Iran; the US would then resupply Israel and receive payment from Israel. The Iranians then promised to do everything in their power to get the hostages released from Lebanon. The operation, handled almost entirely from within the White House, had been kept secret from virtually all of the highest officials in the U.S. government, including top Congressional, Pentagon and State Department officials.

Things began to unravel in November 1986 when a Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Shiraa*, printed an expose on the clandestine operations. The news made its way through Europe and then hit the American media. Reagan was afraid that he would be unable to get the remaining hostages freed after the story broke, so he addressed the public and denied that any such deal had been reached; after all, in 1984 Iran had been designated a state sponsor of terror. He later retracted his statement, admitting that the sale of arms was to a moderate faction opposed to the Ayatollah hardline. The scandal was then further compounded when Oliver North was alleged to have shredded most of the documents regarding the Iranian weapons deal and that money was diverted to the Contras. There were many indications that Ronald Reagan knew that money was being funneled to the Contras, but there was no evidence to prove it.

[11] Yetiv, 54

There were many people that were indicted for this scandal, but the President emerged from it legally if not politically unscathed.

Ronald Reagan's foreign policy was not complicated; he followed a period of drastic reduction in military spending and felt that the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in its armaments. He had proclaimed from the beginning that he would seek peace through strength. Reagan's foreign policies were consistent with realist theory. His first order of business after being elected was to bolster the American military, proving to the Soviets that the U.S. sought power through force. This is one of the first key concepts of the realist theory. Reagan also believed that the United States' interests were better served in a unitary fashion, as he did not care to seek the council of the United Nations. He sought to contain the communist expansion through a show of power. The Reagan Administration's approach to the Iran-Iraq war also demonstrated realist tendencies. The policy concentrated on influencing the war to end in a manner that would be favorable for the US. The policies that the Reagan administration put in place, sought to maximize U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf by influencing the outcome of the Iran-Iraq war. This was accomplished by funneling intelligence to the Iraqi military and removing it from the U.S. list of state sponsored terrorists. By doing this the administration was able to give the Iraqi military an advantage over the Iranians. Realist assumptions of foreign policy are not definitive, but marked by certain guideposts that lead the researcher to the conclusion of a realist ideology. Ronald Reagan sought to expand American interests globally by pursuing a policy that used power as its main directive. He also sought no direction from the international governing body in regards to conflict resolution, instead

choosing to make his decisions unilaterally. These markers define a realist presidential foreign policy.

Succeeding Ronald Reagan as president was his Vice-President George H. W. Bush. George Herbert Walker Bush was sworn in as the 41st President of the United States in January 1989. The President began his term as the Cold War was nearing its end. In his inaugural address he stated: "We live in a peaceful, prosperous time, but we can make it better. For a new breeze is blowing, and a world refreshed by freedom seems reborn."[12] The Soviets were in decline, and the end of the Cold War was near. President Bush, mostly free from the Cold War, believed that the world was headed for a period of peace and cooperation, one that was free from terror and had a stronger pursuit of justice. He promised a new world, one that would be quite different from what anyone had known. While the world had become a more peaceful place since the decline of the Soviet Union, President Bush was determined to spread democracy. He continued in the address: "We know how to secure a more just and prosperous life for man on Earth: through free markets, free speech, free elections, and the exercise of free will unhampered by the state." [13] President Bush's promotion of the human condition in this address showed that he favored a more idealist approach to international relations.

With the fall of communism in the Soviet Union, the familiar guideposts of a realist US foreign policy began to disappear. The previous standard of a bipolar international system with two superpowers was over. Another product of the collapse of communism was the

[12] George H.W. Bush, "Inaugural Address" (Speech, Capital Building, Washington DC), January 20, 1989
[13] Ibid.

abolishment of superpower status itself; removal of the rivalry eliminated the category.[14] This forced the United States to change its foreign policy from the mission it had been committed to for nearly half a century: stopping the spread of communism. Instead, the United States turned its eyes to the Persian Gulf region, which had become a hotbed since the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988.

In February 1989, President Bush issued National Security Review 10, which began the process of creating a new US policy toward the Persian Gulf. By October 1989, it had spelled out detailed U.S. expectations of the states in the Persian Gulf region. The main focus of this policy was the protection of oil exports in the Gulf as they related to U.S. national security.[15] National Directive 26 also declared that the United States would help friendly countries in the region to ensure their security and allow them to have an active role in their own defense. "It is important for the United States to continue to nurture the mutually beneficial and enduring cooperative security relationships with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) that grew out of the Iran/Iraq war."[16] The rest of this directive outlined the role that the United States would play in dealing with Iraq and Iran.

National Security Directive 26 stated that Iran would need to show that it was serious about repairing its relationship with the US. Iran was also required to cease support for

[14] William Pfaff, "Redefining World Power", *Foreign Affairs*, (1991, 70, no. 1: 34-48) (S. A. Yetiv, The Outcomes of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: Some Antecedent Causes 1992) (S. A. Yetiv, The Perisan Gulf Crisis 1997). *Academic Search Premier*, EBSCO*host* (accessed April 20, 2013).
[15] George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, *National Security Directive 26: U.S. Policy Toward the Persian Gulf* (Washington, DC: October 2, 1989), http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/nsd/nsd26.pdf (accessed 04/20/2013)
[16] Ibid.

international terrorists, help to obtain the release of hostages in Lebanon and have good relations with its neighbors, primarily Iraq.

As far as Iraq was concerned, NSD 26 pointed out that "normal relations between the United States and Iraq would serve our longer-term interests and promote stability in both the Gulf and the Middle East."[17] The US planned to encourage compliance in Iraq, by giving it economic and political incentives to moderate its behavior and increase US influence. If Iraq did not cooperate, however, and was found to be using or producing chemical/biological weapons, there would be economic and political sanctions imposed not only from the U.S. but from all of the allied states.

After the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, Iraq proved itself to be a strong contender in the Persian Gulf. The American support of Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war made Iraq more self-assured and confident, bolstering Saddam Hussein's status.[18] The Iran-Iraq war also weakened Iran militarily. Due to the length of the war, Iran's air power had been decreased by about 90%. In addition, the western countries had cut off Iran from any supplies and spare parts that it would have needed to maintain its military. These things gave Saddam Hussein reason to believe that he was the strongest power in the Persian Gulf.

President Bush would have had a relatively uneventful four years had it not been interrupted by the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. Prior to the invasion, some observers alleged that Iraq was making weapons of mass destruction and using them on the Turks in northern

[17] Ibid.
[18] Steve A. Yetiv, "The Outcomes of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: Some Antecedent Causes," *The Academy of Political Science* 107, no. 2 (1992): 197

Iraq. This violated the foreign policy that President Bush had set forth in Security Directive 26, so the US persuaded the United Nations to enact both economic and trade sanctions against Iraq.

These sanctions, however, were not very useful in containing Saddam Hussein. In the months preceding the invasion of Kuwait, Saddam criticized the Gulf States for waging economic war with Iraq, ignoring oil production quotas causing oil prices to remain low, refusing to forgive Iraqi war debt and failing to extend post war reconstruction credit.[19] The Iraqi government was indebted to the government of Kuwait because of the Iran-Iraq war. It is estimated it would have taken Iraq two decades to recover economically, under optimal conditions. Iraq's decision to invade Kuwait was partially determined by the fact that it owed so much money to Kuwait. The other reason for the invasion of Kuwait was that the Iraqi government believed it deserved Kuwaiti lands as a payment for creating a balance against Iran in the region.

On August 2, 1990, Iraq sent 140,000 troops and 1800 tanks to invade Kuwait.[20] President Bush addressed the nation on August 8, 1990, to provide an update on the action that he planned to take against Iraq, if it did not agree to an immediate withdrawal from Kuwait. The President then outlined four principles that the US would stand by in relation to Iraq's invasion: 1) the immediate, unconditional, and complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait; 2) the puppet regime implemented by the Iraqi government be removed and the legitimate government of Kuwait be restored; 3) the U.S. be committed to the security and

[19] Faff, 69
[20] Steve A. Yetiv, *The Persian Gulf Crisis* (Westport: Greenberg Press, 1997), http://site.ebrary.com.proxy.olivet.edu/lib/olivet/docDetail.action?docID=5004309 (accessed May 3, 2013)

stability of the Persian Gulf; 4) the protection of US citizens abroad.[21] President Bush also ordered an embargo of all trade with Iraq and announced sanctions that froze all Iraqi assets in the United States. At this point in the crisis, President Bush was interested in protecting Saudi Arabia, so he deployed troops to the border of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and then began Operation Desert Shield.

In conjunction with Operation Desert Shield, President Bush issued National Security Directive 45 on August 20, 1990. This directive was named *U.S. Policy in Response to the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait* and outlined the US response to Iraqi aggression. In it the President stated that US interests in the Persian Gulf are vital to the national security. These interests included access to oil and the security and stability of key friendly states in the region, especially Saudi Arabia.[22] President Bush again summarized four principles from his speech to Congress, hoping to bring the crisis to an immediate end. This directive also spelled out the US role in the crisis as being one of support, rather than a unilateral movement. "The Secretary of State should continue to work bilaterally with our allies and friends, and in concert with the international community through the United Nations and other fora, to find a peaceful solution to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait."[23]

National Security Directive 45 also outlined President Bush's plan to begin the deployment of troops to the Persian Gulf Region. On November 8, 1990, President Bush

[21] George H W Bush, " (G. H. Bush, Address to the nation Announcing the Deployment of United States Armed Forces to Saudi Arabia 1990)" (speech, U.S. Congress, Washington, DC, August 8, 1990), George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, (accessed April 23, 2013).
[22] George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, *National Security Directive 45: U.S. Policy in Response to the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait* (Washington, DC: August 20, 1990) http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/nsd/nsd45.pdf, (accessed April 23, 2013).
[23] Ibid.

announced that he would send 200,000 US troops to the region to defend Saudi Arabia and to enforce the UN sanctions against Iraq.[24] These troops would work in conjunction with two separate multinational forces called the Multinational Force for Saudi Arabia (MNFSA) and the Multinational Force to enforce sanctions (MNFES). Again, the main goal of the Bush administration would be to contain the Iraqi threat without provoking the other Arab states in the region.

Saddam Hussein was defiant and refused to remove his troops from Kuwait. He did release some foreign hostages by January 1991, but it was not enough to appease the UN or the United States. On January 12, 1991, the US Congress gave President Bush approval to wage war on Iraq. The UN Security council then gave Saddam Hussein until midnight on January 15th to withdraw from Kuwait. On January 17th the US officially launched Operation Desert Storm and President Bush addressed the nation declaring: "Our objective is clear: Saddam Hussein's forces will leave Kuwait. The Legitimate government of Kuwait will be restored to its rightful place, and Kuwait will once again be free."[25] The President reviewed his four principles and also advised the country that this was not just the effort of the United States, but the effort of 28 nations to remove Iraq from Kuwait. He continued, "we have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generation a new world order—a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations."[26]

[24] Yetiv, 220.
[25] George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, " (G. H. Bush, Address to the Nation Announcing Allied Military Action in the Persian Gulf 1991)" (speech, White House, Washington, DC, January 16, 1991) http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=2625&year=1991&month=01 (Engel 2010)
[26] Ibid.

George Bush also authored National Security Directive 54: Responding to Iraqi Aggression in the Gulf. In this directive, he stated that should Iraq resort to using chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, the US would have no choice but to replace the current leadership of Iraq. He also declared that these operations would cease when the four principles outlined from his previous speeches had been met. On February 23, 1991, President Bush and the coalition forces gave Saddam Hussein an ultimatum: he was to leave Kuwait and agree to the terms of surrender. Iraq did not reply to the demands, so the UN decided to use all forces available to expel the Iraqi army from Kuwait. On February 26, 1991, Saddam Hussein's forces began leaving Kuwait, with many surrendering to the allied forces. Saddam did not admit defeat, and the United States did not pursue his army into Iraq. The Bush administration decided that the job that they had intended to do, remove Iraqi troops from Kuwait, was accomplished. Anything further would have threatened the alliances that the United States had with the other Arab nations. Until the end of this term, President Bush continued to enforce the United Nations sanctions imposed on Iraq barring any trade and freezing its US accounts.

George H. W. Bush's foreign policy differed drastically from Ronald Reagan's, even though he was Reagan's Vice-President for eight years. While Reagan kept within the Realist concept of international relations, George H.W. Bush governed more as an Idealist. In his first address, he was concerned about the human condition as he believed that the world would benefit from a new order, one that would promote freedom and alleviation from suffering. President Bush outlined the proposition of peace in his inaugural address and could look forward to a time of prosperity and peace. He also consulted the international community when peace was threatened. With the help of allies through the United Nations, the United

States was able to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. George Bush's worldview focused on three things: his ingrained multilateralism, respect for stability and sovereignty as foundations for sustainable international order, and devotion to personal diplomacy.[27] These principles were in line with the softer Wilsonian Idealism, not the power politics of Realism.

[27] Jeffrey A. Engel, "A Better World… But Don't Get Carried Away: The Foreign Policy of George H. W. Bush Twenty Years On," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 1 (2010) 29.

Chapter 3: Bill Clinton

Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush proved that they had very different approaches to foreign policy. Ronald Reagan favored a more realist approach by implementing the idea of peace through strength. George H. W. Bush favored a more idealist approach with his concept of a new world order and multilateral cooperation in Operation Desert Storm. His presidency was limited to only four years after he was defeated in his reelection bid by Bill Clinton.

William Jefferson Clinton was sworn in as the 42nd President of the United States on January 20, 1993. He was elected by the slightest of margins after a grueling campaign that saw not only a Republican contender in George H. W. Bush but an Independent candidate in Ross Perot. Bill Clinton's campaign strategy focused on the faltering economy; he all but ignored foreign policy issues in the debates. In his first term, Clinton did not have to contend with the Cold War, making these years a relative time of peace. Even before he was elected, however, Clinton came under fire for being weak on foreign policy. George H. W. Bush often criticized Clinton on the campaign trail, implying that he was a draft dodger and a communist sympathizer.

In early 1993, the US entered an era of general peace and prosperity, as Operation Desert Storm, under George H. W. Bush, was successful in asserting US dominance in the Persian Gulf and quelling the Iraqi threat. In his inaugural speech, Clinton stated: "Today, as an old order passes, the new world is more free but less stable. Communism's collapse has called forth old animosities and new dangers. Clearly America must continue to lead the world we did

so much to make."[1] His inaugural speech did not offer any indication of his stance in international relations, and he believed that the world would be a more peaceful place now that the Cold War was over. President Clinton showed his propensity for idealism through this inaugural speech. He, like his predecessor George Bush, wanted to seek a more harmonious world order where the world could be seen as more interdependent.

From the beginning of Bill Clinton's presidency there were many who suggested that Clinton did not have a foreign policy agenda; others thought that his foreign policy was too weak and that he focused too much on domestic issues. The President's focus would be forced to national issues on February 26, 1993, after the World Trade Center in New York City was ravaged by a terrorist bombing, leaving six people dead and more than a thousand injured.[2] In his speech immediately following the attack, President Clinton stated that the full cooperation of every agency would come to aid in this tragedy, but he shied away from any talk of a terrorist attack. This foreshadowed a foreign policy that was indefinite and passive. After this attack on the United States, President Clinton remained indecisive; it would still be some time before he formulated anything that would resemble a foreign policy.

In spite of the domestic problems the President was faced, there were still issues that forced his attention on the Persian Gulf. After Operation Desert Storm, the UN sought to enforce resolutions against Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait. It especially wanted to enforce Resolution 687, which allowed UN weapons inspectors to assess the extent to which Iraq had

[1] Bill Clinton, "Inaugural Address" (Speech, Capital Building, Washington, DC), January 20, 1993.
[2] Richard Miniter, *Losing Bin Laden: How Bill Clinton's Failures Unleashed Global Terror*, (Washington, DC, Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2003), XV.

destroyed its inventory of chemical and biological weapons.[3] Yet, Saddam Hussein continued to defy and deceive UN inspectors who were deployed to examine buildings that had produced weapons of mass destruction. Saddam was very defiant towards the United Nations and the United States in particular. He was especially upset by the redrawn boundary lines between Iraq and Kuwait after the Gulf War cease fire agreement had been reached in 1991. He also was unhappy with the enforcement of the no-fly zones that had been implemented to reduce his threat against the Muslim Kurds in northern Iraq. In retaliation, Saddam Hussein repeatedly violated Kuwaiti territory and ignored the no-fly zone rules.

On June 26, 1993, President Clinton ordered a missile attack against Baghdad. The attack was both a warning and retaliation following Iraq's attempt to have former President George Bush assassinated in Kuwait. In President Clinton's address to the nation he stated that he ordered the attack because, "we will combat terrorism. We will deter aggression. We will protect our people."[4] It was evident that President Clinton did not want to continue to fight Saddam Hussein over the UN inspectors. This preemptive attack was a show of force from the new administration, and it began a cat and mouse game that continued for the next eight years. This preemptive strike does not fall within the parameters of the idealist doctrine. This was a unilateral strike on Iraq that was mainly fueled by power. Clinton had hoped that this strike would change the dynamic between the U.S. and Iraq, giving the U.S. more leverage over the situation in the Gulf.

[3] Steven A. Yetiv, *The Absence of Grand Strategy: The United States in the Persian Gulf 1972-2005*, (Baltimore, MD : John Hopkins University Press, 2008), 124.

[4] David Von Drehle and R Jeffrey Smith, "U.S. Strikes Iraq for Plot to Kill Bush," *Washington Post*, June 27, 1993, (Drehle and Smith 1993)(accessed June 23, 2013).

Iran also created trouble for the United States and the United Nations. After the war with Iraq ended, the Iranians continued to develop biological, nuclear and chemical weapons. Even more problematic, Iran annexed the three islands of the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa, giving it the ability to blockade the Strait of Hormuz if it were threatened, and disrupting oil transportation.[5] Iran also worked to derail any Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements, concluding that Israel was an enemy to the Iranian people. Finally, Iran helped to arm Hezbollah, who also opposed the US presence in the Persian Gulf. [6]

When Bill Clinton was elected president, the United States was in the midst of difficult economic times. His campaign focused on bringing jobs back into the United States, and making the country more competitive in the global market. Clinton did not discuss foreign policy on the campaign trail and that carried over into the first year of his presidency. In his speech to the Yale Alumni in October 1993 he observed: "We know, too, that the world hasn't quite figured out in this post-Cold War world how we're going to deal with a lot of these problems. And whether we-those of us who live in stable societies-can actually reach into others and shape a different and more human course."[7] By again observing the human condition in his speeches, Clinton is asserting his idealist stance. Clinton knew that globalization would be the key to bringing the United States out of its economic depression. This interdependence would be not only economic but diplomatic.

[5] Yetiv, 91.
[6] Ibid., 97
[7] Bill Clinton, "Remarks By the President at Yale Alumni Luncheon" (Speech, New Haven, Yale University), October 9, 1993.

President Clinton believed that the primary role that the United States should play in international affairs was that of peacekeeper and humanitarian. This was evident in Presidential Decision Directive/NSC 25, "US Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations," released on May 3, 1994. Clinton knew that even though the Cold War was over, there were still many threats to peace. "The United States remains committed to meeting such threats, through either unilateral or multilateral action, as our interests dictates."[8] The United States had already been assigned by the United Nations to go on many peacekeeping missions during the Bush administration, so the Clinton administration intended to formalize the agreements that had been made in regards to these peacekeeping missions. The administration, wanted to make sure that its foreign policy strategy did not surrender entirely to UN peacekeeping missions, unless they advanced America's national interest.

After Operation Desert Storm, the Bush administration decided that the best foreign policy strategy for the Persian Gulf was a dual containment that would check both Iraq and Iran simultaneously. Neither Iraq nor Iran would cooperate with the United States, leaving few options for the Bush administration. After Bill Clinton took office, his administration decided that this containment would continue. The goals of this dual containment were: 1) Impede the ability of Iran and Iraq to pose a threat, while also undermining their capability to build conventional and unconventional weaponry, and 2) Force Iraq to comply with all UN resolutions.[9] The second goal was very important to the United States, because it did not want

[8] Bill Clinton, "Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-25", The William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum (Wright 2007), http://www.clintonlibrary.gov/_previous/Documents/2010%20FOIA/Presidential%20Directives/PDD-25.pdf, (accessed May 10, 2013)
[9] Yetiv, 100.

Iraq to comply with some resolutions and ignore others; the U.S. wanted Iraq to comply with ALL of the UN resolutions.

It is important to note that the containment of Iraq was a multilateral effort, while the containment of Iran was a unilateral one. The United States enforced UN resolutions within Iraq which helped to contain it. America sought the council of others when deciding on action against Iraq. Iranian policy, on the other hand, was purely unilateral. The sanctions against Iran were not recognized by most other countries, including Russia. The United States had intended that other countries would join its efforts, but that would not happen.

By August 1996, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a bill that enacted broader sanctions against Iran. This bill was labeled *The Iran and Libya Sanctions Act*. Its purpose was to ban imports and exports into and out of Iran, and deny any US financing.[10] The United States concluded that Iran was trying to procure weapons of mass destruction for the intent of supporting terrorist groups. The act also urged President Clinton to embark on diplomatic efforts to secure the support of the United Nations and other allies for the policy.

While Congress worked to pass legislation to curb the influx of money to Iran and to encourage the UN to continue with its inspections against Iraq, President Clinton struggled to find a foreign policy initiative. Like many things in his presidency, Clinton's foreign policy was fragmented and unclear. As previously discussed, Clinton did continue with George H. W. Bush's policy of containment for Iraq and Iran. The administration's efforts to enforce compliance with UN regulations in Iraq, however, were not working. By 1998, Saddam Hussein

[10] Ibid., 101.

and the UN inspectors had been going back and forth about weapons inspections, as Saddam Hussein continually deceived and eluded the inspectors. After many warnings, the UN began to remove all of its personnel from Iraq. In December 1998, the US and its allies began Operation Desert Fox. In his address to the American public, President Clinton described everything that the United Nations and allied states had done in an effort to get Iraq to comply with inspections. The Iraqi government had promised many times to give UN inspectors full access to its weapons plants and to comply with UN regulators, but it consistently failed to follow through. On November 14, 1998, the US and Great Britain ordered air strikes against Iraq. Iraq backed down and once again agreed to comply with UN regulators; the airstrikes were suspended. Then on December 15, Iraq again failed to comply with UN inspectors; soon after airstrikes began anew. Finally, on December 16, 1998, Operation Desert Fox was launched.[11]

Operation Desert Fox was relatively short, lasting only 72 hours. It primarily targeted bunkers and places that the United Nations believed Saddam Hussein was hiding weapons of mass destruction. The administration believed that "this situation presents a clear and present danger to the stability of the Persian Gulf and the safety of people everywhere. The international community gave Saddam one last chance to resume cooperation with the weapons inspectors. Saddam has failed to seize the chance."[12]

This action was very important for the Clinton administration, because its policy had changed towards Iraq. Prior to the bombings that occurred in December 1998, the policy of the

[11] Steve Wright, *The United States and Persian Gulf Security: The Foundations of the War on Terror*, (Berkshire, Ithaca Press, 2007), 147.
[12] Bill Clinton, " (Address to the Nation: President explains strike on Iraq 1998)" The William J. Clinton Library and Museum, (Public address, Washington D.C., December 16, 1998).

United States was to contain Iraq through sanctions and hope that some inner faction would take over the government and overthrow Saddam Hussein. It was evident however, that that was not likely to happen. "The hard fact is that so long as Saddam remains in power," declared Clinton, "he threatens the well-being of his people, the peace of his region, the security of the world."[13] So the administration went from a policy of containment to a policy of regime change. The other fact was that the administration was being pressured by a Republican controlled Congress that believed that the multilateral effort had failed. Congress concluded that this failure stemmed from the unwillingness of the international community to enforce its own resolutions.[14]

In his speech to the American public after the launch of Operation Desert Fox, President Clinton explained why the strike was so important. He believed that without a strong inspection system, Iraq would be free to retain and rebuild its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons program in months, not years. Clinton also believed that if Saddam Hussein could cripple the weapons inspection system and get away with it, then he would be under the impression that the international community had lost its will to continue to pursue these weapons. Finally, if the U.S. did not follow through with its threat, then it would lose credibility, which had been keeping Saddam Hussein in check for years.[15]

The Clinton Administration's foreign policy initiative towards Iraq at the end of Operation Desert Fox was officially called containment plus regime change. According to US

[13] Ibid.
[14] Wright, 147.
[15] Clinton speech December 16, 1998.

Secretary of State Madeline Albright, "with UNSCOM no longer in Iraq, we shifted our policy towards Baghdad from containment with inspections to an approach we called containment plus."[16] Containment plus allowed the United States to enforce stricter no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq, allowed for stronger actions against Iraqi anti-aircraft facilities, expanded the oil for food program, strengthened the Iraqi people's opposition to Saddam Hussein and adopted regime change as an explicit goal of US policy.

It became evident that the Clinton administration would not be able to execute a forceful regime change in Iraq. Thus there was a need to create a split policy towards Iraq seeking regime change while still allowing UN sanctions and containment. By the end of 1999, Iraq was once again allowing UN weapons inspectors into the country.

Toward the end of President Clinton's term, his foreign policy was still in question. He addressed it at the State of the Union Speech that year: "If we do all of these things- pursue peace, fight terrorism, increase our strength, and renew our alliances- then we will meet our generations historic responsibility to build a strong twenty first century America."[17] Bill Clinton had been trying to find the right stance in his foreign policy. He wanted to manage the era of peace in which the United States found itself, while addressing threats that he knew could not be left unchecked.

Clinton also addressed his foreign policy strategy in a 1999 San Francisco Speech. He argued that there were five central national security challenges that faced the United States in

[16] Yetiv, 126.
[17] Bill Clinton, "State of the Union Address", (Speech, House Chambers, Washington DC), January 20, 1999.

the coming millennium; these security challenges included building a more peaceful world, bringing Russia and China into the international system as open and stable nations, protecting Americans against threats that have no borders, creating a global trading and financial system that would benefit all of America and building a world where freedom remained dominant.[18]

The rest of Bill Clinton's term remained relatively quiet. Saddam Hussein would continue to defy the UN weapons inspectors, and Iran would continue to resist the United States sanctions.

When Bill Clinton first came into office, his foreign policy was virtually nonexistent. He was more concerned about stabilizing the US economy than the world after the Cold War, yet he was still an idealist president. He understood that the United States could only benefit from acknowledging the interdependence of the international community. From his limited track record one can conclude that his foreign policies were somewhat erratic. When first elected to office, Clinton exhibited idealist policies. He spent much of his presidency sending troops on humanitarian projects, taking the need for power out of these decisive actions. Clinton also exhibited idealist policies by engaging the United Nations is the conflicts in the Persian Gulf. The multilateral effort in getting Saddam Hussein to comply with regulations was further proof that the Clinton administration was swaying toward an idealist foreign policy. Clinton engaged the United States in many humanitarian causes, but he lacked a coherent strategy.

[18] Colin Campbell and Bert A Rockman ed. " *The Clinton Legacy*", (Campbell and Rockman 2000)(New York, Chatham House, 2000), 231.

President Clinton surrounded himself with various people who had many different opinions, so at times his policies seemed ad hoc. He prided himself in understanding every angle of a problem before making a decision, when he actually made a decision. It seemed that he was more concerned with getting approval, instead of sticking with a particular ideology. In the case of the terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, he chose not to pursue the men responsible outside of the US, even though there was intelligence that pointed to Osama bin Laden.

Early in his administration, Clinton made his decisions regarding issues in Iraq multilaterally and chose diplomacy over use of force. He also believed that Saddam Hussein would lose his power through a coup d'état within his own country as opposed to being overthrown by an outside power. It was Clinton's hope that after this coup, democracy would be installed as the new system of government in Iraq. He also believed that nations who were ruled democratically were more stable and less likely to opt for war.

Although Bill Clinton was a humanitarian and wanted to pursue global peace, he also exhibited realist tendencies in his actions. When it was decided to bomb Baghdad because of an apparent assassination attempt on George Bush, this was a show of power, changing his policies from idealist to realist. For those that subscribe to the realist position of international relations, everything is based on this type of power. In fact, power is the decisive factor in every political situation, according to realists. By showing Saddam Hussein that pushing the United States would not be tolerated, Clinton established a precedent based on power. It would seem that pressure from the Republican-controlled house pushed the president to react

to Saddam Hussein with force in 1998's Operation Desert Fox. After the end of the operation, Clinton wanted to again pursue humanitarian efforts with Iraq and pushed for the Oil for Food program to help those that were affected by the sanctions against Iraq. The realist side of Clinton foreign policy has to do with his pursuit of regime change and his show of power. His idealist side manifested a desire to expand democracy and strive for global peace multilaterally and without war.

Bill Clinton's foreign policy was very fragmented and did not adhere to one theory or another. The theories that carried past president's foreign policies would evolve as the new millennium approached.

Chapter 4: George W. Bush

Bill Clinton was the first president following the cold war, and it seemed as though his presidency was an uneventful one. His sense of foreign policy was incoherent; it was not one of the more emphasized parts of his presidency. As the 20th century turned into the 21st, the United States elected a new president with a familiar name, George W. Bush. Would his policy follow his father's, or would he forge his own path in the world of international relations?

George Walker Bush was officially elected the 43rd President of the United States on December 12, 2000. His election was one of the most tumultuous in U.S. history. It began on November 7, 2000, as a contest between Bush and then Vice President Al Gore. The election results hinged on the state of Florida, and they were mired in controversy. Prior to the polls closing in Florida, many television stations declared Al Gore the winner, forcing the Bush election team to scramble. The main Republican stronghold of Florida, the pan-handle, had not even finished voting, and there was concern that the premature announcement could cause some voters to turn away from the polls. As the night went on it seemed that the networks were wrong in prematurely giving Florida to Al Gore, and they eventually reversed themselves giving the state to Bush. At 1:15 AM, Al Gore called George Bush to concede Florida, but then later rescinded. There were calls for a recount of votes in Florida, because the entire election hinged on that state. It eventually went all the way to the United States Supreme Court in the case of Gore v. Bush. The Supreme Court decided in a vote of 7-2 that Florida's chaotic, inconsistent recount procedure had violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution. The court also decided by a vote of 5-4 that there was no way that Florida could get the recount finished in time for the electoral college; therefore, the final tally stood at 2,912,790 votes for

George Bush and 2,912,253 for Al Gore.[1] George Bush was declared the winner of the election on December 12, 2000.

The 2000 presidential elections would go down in history as one of the most controversial, but this was only a precursor to what was to come in this new presidency. George W. Bush had promised a stronger foreign policy than his predecessor, Bill Clinton, and also advocated a military buildup. In his inaugural address, Bush outlined his foreign policy, discussing the promotion of democracy on a global scale: "The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake. America remains engaged in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our nation birth."[2] Through this inaugural address, George W. Bush showed his propensity for the realist stance of foreign policy. He asserted that the United States was the primary actor in the international community and its actions could result in unilateral operations. President Bush also asserted that U.S. interests globally would be responsible for shaping a free world.

Bush entered office at a time when the United States remained in relative peace. There were no indications that there was any trouble on the horizon, and if there were, they were not widely understood. It was assumed, now that the Soviet Union was no longer a threat, that the world stage was unipolar, with the United States occupying the position of sole superpower.[3] While there were many other powerful countries in the world, none would be so powerful as

[1] George W. Bush, "Decision Points" (New York: Crown Publisher, 2010) (G. W. Bush, Decision Points 2010), 81.
[2] George W. Bush, "Inaugural Address", (Speech, Capital Building, Washington D.C), January 20, 2001.
[3] Fareed Mohamedi and Yahya Sadowski, "The Decline (But Not Fall) of US Hegemony in the Middle East," *Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP),* no. 220 (Autumn, 2001): 13.

the United States. This unilateral diplomatic stance was in stark contrast to the multilateralism of the Clinton administration, which valued foreign policy as a joint venture. George Bush believed that multilateralism had weakened the US militarily and allowed America's enemies to flourish. His particular brand of unilateralism would be influential within the first year of his presidency.

Early in his presidency, George W. Bush had to contend with Saddam Hussein's continued defiance of UN resolutions requiring him to disclose any weapons of mass destruction that he possessed, along with all of the necessary paperwork required by these sanctions. President Bush was responsible to keep Congress updated on the struggles of securing Iraq's compliance. In his message to Congress on July 31, 2001, he reported that "the government of Iraq continues to engage in activities inimical to stability in the Middle East and hostile to the United States interests in the region. Such Iraqi actions pose a continuing, unusual, and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States."[4]

Bush's treatment of Iraq remained the same as that of the past two administrations, which believed that containment was the best option. The threat imposed by Iraq's procurement of weapons of mass destruction was not yet great enough for the United States to act further. America would again bide its time to wait for an internal faction that could overthrow the Iraqi government. There was no indication that Iraq was a direct threat so the United States would contend with these sanctions. Eight months after George W. Bush was

[4] George W. Bush, Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Iraq (Message to Congress, White House, July 31, 2001) http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=PPP&browsePath=president-57%2F2001%2F02%3BA%3BJuly+1+to+December+31%2C+2001&isCollapsed=false&leafLevelBrowse=false&isDocumentResults=true&ycord=0 (accessed July 20, 2013).

sworn in as president the United States, however, events unfolded that changed US foreign policy forever.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, four airplanes were hijacked by terrorists and used as weapons to demolish the World Trade Center in New York and damage the Pentagon building in Washington D.C. The fourth plane went down in a field in Pennsylvania due to the heroism of the passengers.

A few days after the terrorist attacks, President Bush assembled his national security team and announced: "We are at war against terror. From this day forward this is the new priority of the administration."[5] The fight against terrorism and the countries that harbored these terrorists took center stage in President Bush's foreign policy. The first bits of intelligence that came out after the attacks pointed to al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden as the perpetrators behind these acts. The intelligence also indicated that Afghanistan and its Taliban controlled government had harbored al Qaeda. In Bush's speech to the nation the night of the attacks he declared: "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."[6]

The Gulf Region was a hot bed for terrorist activities. Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were known for producing some of the world's worst terrorist organizations. The mastermind behind the September 11th attacks was a man named Osama bin Laden. His anger toward the United States had been fueled by the fact that the U.S. used Saudi Arabia as a launching pad for Operation Desert Storm. Osama bin Laden believed that the United States

[5] Bush, 134.
[6] George W Bush, "Address to the Public", (White House, Washington DC, September 11, 2001), http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/bush.speech.text/index.html, accessed July 22, 2013.

was an immoral, corrupt enemy to Islam. His rhetoric was not new, but it was the first time that terrorists had acted upon it with such devastating success.

Immediately following the September 11 attacks, President Bush began to work on a new foreign policy, one that would not only avenge the attack on the United States but ensure safety within the country. It would be in this new foreign policy that President Bush would split from his idealist stance. He would now seek to establish a policy that kept American interests at the forefront allowing the U.S. to preemptively strike if need be. There were three main goals to Bush's foreign policy: the first was to keep the terrorists from striking again; the second was to make clear to the country and the world that the United States had embarked on a new kind of war; and the third was to help the affected areas recover and make sure that the terrorists did not succeed in shutting down the U.S. economy or dividing our society.[7] Within three days of the terrorist attacks, Congress passed a war resolution authorizing the President to use all necessary and appropriate force against nations and organizations that aided the terrorists that attacked on September 11th.

In his speech to Congress on September 20, 2011, President Bush outlined his demands to the Taliban government which he believed was partially responsible for the attacks because it was harboring Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda operatives. The Taliban were to deliver all al Qaeda leaders to the United States, release any foreign nationals imprisoned in Afghanistan, protect all foreign journalists, immediately and permanently close every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, as well as hand over every terrorist from these training camps. These demands

[7] Bush, 140.

were non-negotiable.[8] The September 11th attacks on the United States were considered an act of war, and as such President Bush was treating the Taliban as a responsible party in the war. The President knew that securing Taliban compliance with his demands was a long shot, so the United States began to prepare for war.

As the United States prepared for war, NATO invoked Article 5 of its charter: an attack on one member is an attack on all. Secretary of State Colin Powell began to rally coalition partners, such as Great Britain and Australia to help with the impending attack on Afghanistan and the Taliban. The invasion of Afghanistan was called Operation Enduring Freedom and it was carried out in four phases. The first phase connected Special Forces with CIA teams to clear the way for conventional troops. The second phase consisted of a massive air campaign to take Al Qaeda and Taliban targets and deliver humanitarian relief. The third phase was the landing of ground troops to hunt down the remaining Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters, which would be carried out by a combination of US and coalition forces. The fourth phase of the operation would be to stabilize Afghanistan and help its people build a free society.[9]

In his memoirs President Bush remarked, "I knew in my heart that striking Al Qaeda, removing the Taliban, and liberating the suffering people of Afghanistan was necessary and just."[10] It was of no matter if any other country backed the United States on Operation Enduring Freedom; President Bush was willing to invade Afghanistan whether he had multilateral cooperation or not. It was more important to remove the breeding ground for

[8] George W. Bush, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress", (Speech, House of Representatives, Washington DC, September 20, 2001).
[9] Bush, 194.
[10] Bush, 197.

terrorists than to work diplomatically to resolve the situation. As it turned out, there was initial cooperation from other countries on the invasion, but it would not last forever.

It was also necessary to reinvent US foreign policy after the terrorist attacks on September 11th. In President Bush's speech to Congress on September 20, 2001, he began to outline his new foreign policy. In a much quoted part of this speech Bush declared, "every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists."[11] As mentioned above, President Bush believed that the United States could always venture into international relations unilaterally; there were no other superpowers to challenge this notion. With his declaration that nations were either for us or against us, President Bush set the groundwork for multinational operations, because there were few who would oppose the United States. It was that part of the speech that attracted the international community to the United States' cause of hunting down the terrorists responsible for these attacks. The speech also contained the beginnings of the Bush Doctrine.

President Bush had made it clear that the United States would not rest until all of those responsible for the 9/11 attacks were brought to justice. The key elements of the Bush doctrine were outlined in the National Security Strategy (NSS) of September 2002: "The United States possesses unprecedented— and unequaled—strength and influence in the world. Sustained by faith in the principles of liberty, and the value of a free society, this position comes with unparalleled responsibilities, obligations, and opportunity. The great strength of this nation must be used to promote a balance of power that favors freedom."[12] The United States would

[11] Georg W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress.
[12] George W. Bush, "National Security Strategy" (The White House, September 2002), accessed 07/28/2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/.

lead the world into a new, peaceful era by providing countries the opportunity to become free societies.

According to the NSS, the United States can accomplish its goal by doing the following things: champion aspirations for human dignity; strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends; work with others to defuse regional conflicts; prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends, with weapons of mass destruction; ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade; expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy; develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power; and transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.[13] By creating multiple free governments worldwide, the United States could prevent another terrorist attack and make new allies.

The primary purpose of the NSS of 2002 was to prevent another attack. President Bush also believed that in reaching these objectives the US could prevent hostile states from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It was a blank check that allowed the president unlimited power to determine the international conflicts that the US would engage. Finally, if the US followed these goals in its foreign policy decisions, America would remain preeminent in the international system.

The Bush doctrine became the foreign policy framework of the administration throughout the rest of its tenure. Founded on the National Security Directive of September 2002, it rested

[13] Ibid,

on two main pillars. First due to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the US could not rule out the option of preemptive strikes instead of reactive strikes. Preemptive strikes would give the military the option of destroying terrorist training camps before they could strike the United States mainland. The second pillar is that tyranny in the Middle East was the root cause of the September 11 terrorist attacks. As such the United States must remove fanatical aggressive despotisms and promote democracy and change in that region.[14] The Bush doctrine also encompassed four subthemes: a strong belief that a state's domestic regime determines its foreign policy, the perception that great threats can only be defeated by new policies, preventative war, and a willingness to act unilaterally when necessary.[15]

President Bush launched Operation Enduring Freedom in May 2002. His justification for the war with Afghanistan was that the Afghani government had knowingly harbored the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks. The question of justification for the war in Iraq would be altogether different, but the Bush doctrine would provide the rationale for that.

Prior to September 11, 2001, President Bush continued down the path that the Clinton administration had forged for Iraq, which was containment plus. The Clinton Administration had already discussed the need for regime change in Iraq. But Clinton was reluctant to pursue that course so the sanctions continued. During the early days of the Bush administration, the defiance of Saddam Hussein was still obvious. He continued to evade the UN weapons inspectors, and he implied that he still harbored weapons of mass destruction. President Bush

[14] Robert Kaufman, *In Defense of the Bush Doctrine* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 1.
[15] Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine", *Political Science Quarterly*, no 118 (Fall 2003): 365.

initially chose to deal with Saddam Hussein diplomatically, using a plan that was a little different from containment plus. He believed that Saddam Hussein loved power, so if there was a way to convince Saddam Hussein that he would lose his power, then maybe he would comply with the UN sanctions; this approach was called coercive diplomacy.[16] Coercive diplomacy could be achieved by applying two pressures. The first would be to rally a coalition of nations to make clear that Saddam's defiance of his international obligations was unacceptable. Secondly, the coalition would develop a credible military option that would be used if Saddam Hussein failed to comply.[17] In his memoir, President Bush stated that after 9/11, he planned to resolve the Iraq problem diplomatically, unless evidence was presented tying Saddam Hussein to the terrorist plot. The President believed that the best way to demonstrate to Saddam Hussein just how serious he was would be for the United States military to be successful in Afghanistan.[18] After the 9/11 attacks Bush believed that it was better to stay on the offensive than the defensive, so the defiance of Saddam Hussein went from being a nuisance to a credible threat.

In September 2002, British intelligence estimated that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons in excess of UN restrictions, and if left unchecked, Iraq would have nuclear weapon capability within a decade. The same British intelligence reported that Iraq was harboring an Al Qaeda terrorist capable of making biological weapons. It was that link which gave the president the authority to escalate operations in Iraq. President Bush decided that the time had come to neutralize an Iraqi threat which had been allowed to fester for more than a decade. The United

[16] Bush, 230.
[17] Bush, 236.
[18] Bush, 191.

States was prepared to act unilaterally if necessary but decided to get a UN resolution for support anyway. On November 8, 2002, the UN voted unanimously to approve resolution 1441, which stated that Iraq had thirty days to submit a current and accurate declaration of all weapons of mass destruction programs.[19] When Saddam Hussein submitted the paperwork on December 7, it was all irrelevant to the resolution. The US then withdrew any other call for resolutions within the UN, and on March 17, 2003, President Bush addressed the nation.

In this national address, President Bush outlined his reasons for going to war with Iraq. He relied on the Bush doctrine: "Instead of drifting along toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety."[20] Saddam Hussein's defiance was enough to justify a preemptive strike that would protect the United States from another attack. By citing the events of September 11, 2001, President Bush indicated that he was willing to remove Saddam Hussein from power before another tragedy could happen. The president also explained to the country that "before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed. The United States of America has the sovereign authority to use force in assuring its own national security. That duty falls to me as commander in chief by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep."[21] This was also consistent with the principle of preemptive strike.

Before President Bush addressed the nation on March 17, he had given Saddam Hussein a final ultimatum. Saddam and his sons were to leave Iraq within 48 hours, or the United States was going to come and forcibly remove them from power. As the hours ticked down with no

[19] Bush, 241.
[20] George W Bush, "National Address on the conflict with Iraq", (Speech, White House, Washington, DC, March 17, 2003).
[21] Ibid.

response from Saddam Hussein, it became clear that the United States would be involved in another conflict alongside Afghanistan. On March 19, 2003, President Bush gave the order to launch Operation Iraqi Freedom. By April 9, Baghdad fell to the coalition forces, and Saddam Hussein went into hiding. For the rest of his presidency George Bush was involved in a two front war, one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. Yet democracy was hard to accomplish, and that would remain the challenge into the next presidency.

George W. Bush's presidency began tumultuously. His election came under scrutiny, and he would remain under a microscope for the next eight years. When President Bush took the oath of office, he was determined that his foreign policy be the opposite of Bill Clinton's. President Bush believed that the Clinton administration had squandered opportunities to defeat terrorists by engaging in humanitarian missions. The United States was the sole super power to survive the Cold War; therefore, the missions that it would need to get involved in could be of its own choosing. At the beginning of his presidency, George W. Bush favored a realist approach to international relations, because he saw the United States as the balance in the international struggle for power. He planned to build up the military and finish the missile shield started by Ronald Reagan. By asserting American power globally, Bush kept U.S. interests at the forefront.

The events of September 11, 2001, changed everything. Bush began to view US foreign policy in a more Wilsonian idealist light. In order to keep the world safe from terrorists, more democracies were required. Since democracies usually do not fight other democracies, their creation would keep peace in the world. When Bush decided to launch Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, he argued that the United States would be the liberator of an

oppressed Afghani people, who would respond by moving toward democracy. The president sought out the international community in bringing to justice those who attacked the United States. President Bush understood that the United States would carry a heavy burden, if it entered that war unilaterally. The burden would be financial but also in lives lost. So he sought the help of a coalition in the fight to free the Afghani people. In Operation Iraqi Freedom just one year later, President Bush sought the same help in deposing Saddam Hussein.

President Bush received the help of the international community initially for the invasion of Iraq, but that cooperation quickly waned. His idea of the preemptive strike to prevent further terrorist attacks went to the heart of the realist ideology. Thucydides explained main argument for war was that it was based on fear. It was this fear of another attack that led President Bush to invade Iraq.

There were elements of both idealist and realist ideology in the Bush doctrine: idealism in the promotion of democracy, and realism in unilateralism and the preemptive military strike. Yet if President Bush had to be labeled as promoting a particular ideology it would have to be the realist ideology. Had the September 11 terrorist attacks not happened, the president's stance on international relations may have been different. Many people believed that the idealist approach that Bill Clinton took to international relations was partly to blame for these attacks. Some concluded that if President Clinton had spent more time punishing terrorists instead of sending US troops on humanitarian missions, then the 9/11 attacks may have been avoided. That notion could encourage any President to move the opposite direction and promote preemptive strike, instead of diplomacy.

The wars that began early in the Bush presidency continued into the next administration as well. It would become widely accepted that the intelligence that propelled the United States into a war with Iraq was actually untrue. It would be left to the new president to try and bring about the democracy that the Bush administration had strived for, and it would lead to a strategy to bring about that change.

Chapter 5: Barack Obama

The turn of the 20th century was a very tumultuous time for the United States. The outcome of the presidential election of 2000 was unknown for five weeks while the Supreme Court decided the results. After President George W. Bush was elected, the United States was attacked by terrorists and two wars ensued. President Bush was determined to spread democracy around the world, following an idealist approach in his foreign policy. Yet his desire to build up the military and face international challenges unilaterally showed a strain of realism. In November 2008 the people of the United States voted for change, and that is in effect what they received.

Barack H. Obama was elected the 44th President of the United States on November 4, 2008. He held off the Republican nominee John McCain to win the election with 53% of the vote.[1] The platform on which Obama campaigned was one of change. He asked the people of the United States to vote for a new administration and to change the policies that were in place. The United States was in the midst of some economic hardship due to the two wars that were being fought simultaneously, as well as the recent crash of the housing and financial markets. Reckless spending had put many people on the streets and sent many jobs overseas. It was into this environment that President Obama stepped, and the task of moving the United States in a different direction would prove to be a daunting one.

President Obama remarked in his inaugural address in January 2009: "And so, to all the other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born, know that America is a friend of each nation, and every

[1] "2008 Presidential Election," CNN, November 4, 2008, http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/results/president/ (accessed 8/03/13)

man, woman and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity. And we are ready to lead once more."[2] It was clear that President Obama wanted to break from the previous administration's foreign policies. From his inauguration, the President outlined his foreign policy agenda for Iraq and Afghanistan: "We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan."[3] In this speech the idealist ideology is dominant. Once again the United States will return the world to a more harmonious state by allowing Iraq and Afghanistan to rule itself instead of being ruled. He also believed that the Iraqi war was a mistake and that the worthwhile war was in Afghanistan.

Immediately after his inauguration, President Obama went to work repairing the damage that the United States' global reputation had taken because of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was not surprising that many in the Arab nations considered these wars less as a protection of United States national interests and more as a war of Islam versus the United States. President Obama wanted to change this perception, and he decided that the first step was to change the tone of US rhetoric.

In 2009, President Obama began speaking about the need for a lasting global peace. His first address was in Prague, where he expressed the idea that common security comes from the strength of alliances. "NATO's mission in Afghanistan is fundamental to the safety of people on both sides of the Atlantic," Obama declared. "We are demonstrating that free nations can make common cause on behalf of our common security."[4] In this speech, President Obama

[2] Barack H. Obama, "Inaugural Address", (speech, Capital Building, Washington, DC, January 21, 2009)
[3] Ibid.
[4] Barack H. Obama, "Remarks By President Barack Obama", (speech, Hradcany Square, Prague, Czech Republic, April 5, 2009).

addressed the need to have cooperation among nations to ensure that their borders would be secure from future terrorist attacks. This is the fundamental policy of the idealist theory of international relations. The principle of collective security and the need for an international governing body to intervene in interstate discretions would promote a more peaceful world.

The speech that President Obama gave in Prague also highlighted the need to address relations with Iran. Past administrations had sought to contain Iran by subjecting it to weapons inspections and sanctions. President Obama wanted a change, so in his speech he stated, "Iran has yet to build a nuclear weapon. My administration will seek engagement with Iran based on mutual interests and mutual respect."[5] He went added that the United States respected Iran's need to pursue nuclear energy, as long as their plan did not involve creating nuclear weapons. This was the main objective of the speech; it was intended to jump start the process of nuclear proliferation talks. The need to keep nuclear weapons out of terrorist's hands was imperative.

Following this speech, President Obama flew to Cairo to address the United States' key Arab ally in the Middle East. The purpose of this speech was to reach out to the Muslim community to repair the damage that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had caused. Obama wanted to convey that the United States fought these wars only as a means to protect the security of the American people: "I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles -- principles of justice

[5] Ibid.

and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings."[6] The President knew that the war in Iraq would have been fought for nothing if the Iraqis believed that the US was opposed Islam. He also believed that the job of creating a stable, democratic environment in Afghanistan would be impossible if Afghanis concluded that the US was fighting Islam.

In this speech, he also addressed the fact that although the United States is tolerant of Islam, it will not endure the endless violence of extremists. It must be noted that President Obama, after being elected to office, refrained from using the words *terrorist* or *war on terror* so as not to unnecessarily aggravate extremist tension in the Muslim world. The violence of extremists is what brought the United States to Afghanistan, and it is what was keeping it there. As long as there was a threat, the United States would confront it.

In October 2009, President Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It was in his acceptance speech in Oslo that the President outlined his foreign policy agenda by discussing the idea of a just war. He went on to explain that a war was justified if it met certain conditions: "If it is waged as a last resort or in self-defense; if the force used is proportional; and if, whenever possible, civilians are spared from violence."[7] The idea of a just war has rarely been observed during the past century. The President went on to explain that the ever-changing world would be required to rethink the ideas of just war as well as just peace.[8] The purpose of this speech was to address the need for all nations to adhere to a common standard

[6] Barack H. Obama, "Remarks by the President on a New Beginning", (Speech, Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009).
[7] Barack H. Obama, "Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize", (speech, Oslo City Hall, Oslo Norway, December 10, 2009).

[8] Ibid.

to govern the use of force. Again, President Obama is touting the idealist stance in his foreign policy. By engaging in more peaceful resolutions and approaching these problems from a human perspective, he takes the idea of sovereignty out the discussion and creates a one world order.

These three speeches early in President Obama's first year in office would serve as the basis of his foreign policy. President Obama took the lead in his administration's foreign policy, developing an activist vision that confronted instead of contained. His main goals were to refurbish the US image abroad, especially in the Muslim world, to begin negotiations on nuclear proliferation by offering an outstretched hand to Iran, and to create a global alliance to combat violent extremists. President Obama also wanted to begin U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq and ensure that al Qaeda and the Taliban did not regain power in Afghanistan. The President always argued that the war that the United States really needed to concentrate on was Afghanistan. It was common knowledge that the countries of Afghanistan and Pakistan harbored many terrorists responsible for attacks worldwide. Also, Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States had not yet been captured. This was unfinished business for the United States, and President Obama pledged to find and bring to justice this enemy.

In early 2009, President Obama started implementing steps to wind down the military operations in Iraq, intending to end all military operations there by 2011. In February 2009, President Obama gave a speech at Camp Lejeune to formally announce the end of military operations in Iraq. He believed that the fate of Iraq lay not in the military but in the democratic

principles that the U.S. would leave behind. At this point the United States would begin transitioning the Iraqi government into the Iraqi's hands and removing U.S. troops gradually. The President gave a sixteen month timeline in which to remove the last remaining troops from Iraq. "The drawdown of our military should send a clear signal that Iraq's future is now its own responsibility," he stated. "The long-term success of the Iraqi nation will depend upon decisions made by Iraq's leaders and the fortitude of the Iraqi people. Iraq is a sovereign country with legitimate institutions; America cannot--and should not--take their place.[9] As long as the Iraqi government was able to control its populace, the United States would no longer need a military presence in Iraq. If it maintained its democracy, Iraq would be of no threat to the United States and would become an important ally in the Persian Gulf.

President Obama then turned his attention to the war in Afghanistan. As mentioned above, Afghanistan and Pakistan were known harborers of terrorists, and the need to eliminate that threat against the United States was imperative. The two-front war that the United States had fought during the past six years had taken a toll on the pursuit of the terrorists behind the September 11, 2001, attacks. In 2009 the United States was not close to either capturing Osama bin Laden or converting Afghanistan to a free government.

Prior to the end of President George W. Bush's term, the Afghani's held their first election. It had been mired in so much corruption that many candidates dropped out. This led to much unrest within the Afghani public, creating demonstrations and a renewed call for the removal of all allied forces. This turmoil within the Afghani government also allowed the resurgence of the Taliban and al Qaeda within Afghanistan. President Obama knew that the

[9] Barack H. Obama, "Responsibly Ending the War in Iraq", (speech, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, February 27, 2009).

only way to take back Afghanistan from the extremists was to find Osama bin Laden and send more troops to the region.

The idea of sending more troops to Afghanistan was extremely unpopular in the United States. After seven years, the American people were tired of wars and its costs, not just monetarily, but in American lives. President Obama had to sell the American people on the need to send more troops. He decided to unveil his plan for Afghanistan in an address to the West Point Military Academy. He stated, "as commander in chief, I have determined that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan. After 18 months, our troops will begin to come home. These are the resources that we need to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan."[10] This unilateral response to the al Qaeda threat in Afghanistan and Pakistan was not well received globally, either. Many countries expressed outrage with the United States, comparing President Obama's foreign policy decisions to those of George W. Bush. President Obama's policy on Afghanistan was favoring a realist approach. He believed that it served the U.S. interest to unilaterally increase troop capacity to secure the country from the Taliban. By doing so he established that the United States was the primary actor in this region, taking action in defiance of the international community.

In May 2010, President Obama unveiled his National Security Strategy (NSS). Its purpose was to lay the foreign policy ground work for the rest of the President's term. In it he declared: "Yet as we fight the wars in front of us, we must see the horizon beyond them – a world in which America is stronger, more secure, and is able to overcome our challenges while

[10] Barack H. Obama "The US Strategy in Afghanistan" (speech, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, December 1, 2009).

appealing to the aspirations of people around the world."[11] One of the challenges facing the United States in the future was the threat of Iranian nuclear weaponry. In the NSS, the President addressed the need for a comprehensive nonproliferation and nuclear security strategy. This would serve a twofold purpose: it would prevent the arms race between Russia, China and the United States, and by reducing the amount of nuclear arms each country has, it would give the United States more room to negotiate limits to the Iranian pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The NSS also sought to establish the need for engagement with countries that might support the US. President Obama wanted to engage negotiations with countries like Iran, for example, instead of establishing containment policies that had little effect. "To adversarial governments, we offer a clear choice, abide by international norms, and achieve the political and economic benefits that come with greater integration with the international community; or refuse to accept this pathway, and bear the consequence of this decision," promises the NSS.[12] While previous administrations had cut off all contact with nations that were deemed enemies of the United States, the Obama administration pursued open dialogue with adversarial governments. President Obama argued that Iran had the right to pursue nuclear power to fuel its country, but it did not have the right to pursue nuclear weapons.

The NSS specifically calls for increased military action against al Qaeda and its violent extremist affiliates. It also specifies the importance of securing the stability of Afghanistan and forcing Pakistan to pursue extremists within its borders. The administration developed a three

[11] White House Archives, "National Security Strategy, (Washington DC, May 2010), http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf (accessed July 30, 2013).
[12] Ibid.

pronged strategy: 1) The military and the International Security Assistance Force would target the insurgency in Afghanistan and prepare Afghan security forces for transition by July 2011, 2) The U.S. would work with the United Nations and the Afghan government to improve accountability and effective government, and 3) The U.S. would strengthen Pakistan's democracy and development by providing substantial assistance responsive to the needs of the people.[13]

President Obama believed that the United States could effectively reduce the risk to American lives by creating a lasting democratic environment in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The President sought to change the perspective of America by returning to the Afghani and Iraqi people governments that were run themselves rather than a puppet government of the United States. At the time of this paper, President Obama is one year into his second term. He made good on his promise to remove all of the US troops from Iraq, but the insurgency in Afghanistan has remained. The surge of troops in 2010 proved to be beneficial as al Qaeda has been diminished in the country. The United States was successful in finding and killing Osama bin Laden in Pakistan on May 2, 2011.

President Barack Obama has had a very interesting approach to foreign policy. He is a truly postmodern president. While George W. Bush's foreign policy changed slightly after the September 11 terrorist attacks, President Obama has employed both realist and idealist policies as the situation warranted. In fact, President Obama addressed this issue in his Noble Peace Prize speech stating, "within America, there has long been a tension between those who describe themselves as realists or idealists – a tension that suggests a stark choice between the

[13] Ibid.

narrow pursuit of interests or an endless campaign to impose our values around the world. I reject these choices."[14] He believed that neither approach would work in today's world.

If one examines President Obama's foreign policy so far, one could say that he has been trying to balance both realism and idealism. He has promoted the need of the international community to govern by way of collective security. But at the same time he has made it abundantly clear that American interests in Afghanistan will not be compromised. He did aspire to promote democracy, but that was not a priority. He also declared that if necessary the United States could strike unilaterally to ensure the security of the country. The president seems willing to engage governments that do not favor the United States in order to resolve differences, using the military as a last resort. An example of this has been the current crisis in Syria. There has been conflict the Middle East for many years, but it has culminated with proposed U.S. intervention of Syria in September 2013.

Syria has been embattled by a civil war between rebel forces that want a more democratic government and the government of President Bashar al-Assad. When the Arab spring uprisings took place in 2011 it effected many countries of the Middle East. In an effort to maintain its supremacy, the government of Bashar al-Assad cracked down on these uprisings with violence. The Obama administration took notice and on April 29, 2011 imposed sanctions against Syria. While these sanctions were imposed by the administration, there was a consensus that they would not influence Syria's civil war, but would call on President al-Assad to step down. Obama stated, "The United States cannot and will not impose this transition upon Syria. It is up to the Syrian people to choose their own leaders, and we have heard their

[14] Obama, "Remarks by the President at the acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize."

strong desire that there not be foreign intervention in their movement. What the United States will support is an effort to bring about a Syria that is democratic, just, and inclusive for all Syrians. We will support this outcome by pressuring President Assad to get out of the way of this transition, and standing up for the universal rights of the Syrian people along with others in the international community."[15] This humanitarian effort is indicative of the idealist ideology that was so prevalent in the presidency of Bill Clinton as well as Barack Obama. The US was willing to put aside its growing concerns about the instability that this civil war was imposing on the region, to allow democracy to flourish.

In June of 2012 the Geneva Communiqué agreed to a political solution to the ongoing civil war in Syria by establishing a transitional government body which would have full authority to establish an elected Syrian leadership.[16] This led to the Syrian Coalition being launched by November 2012. This coalition was recognized as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people and one that the U.S. would provide support to against the al-Assad regime.

By the end of 2012, the situation in Syria had grown steadily worse, as President al-Assad was now threatening to use chemical weapons if his regime was attacked by any outside forces. Within the United Nations as well, Syria seemed to have an ally in both China and Russia, with both countries casting votes against any action toward the government of Bashar al-Assad. It would seem that the United States was not only trying to secure safety for the Syrian rebels but they were going to have to compete against China and Russia to do so.

[15] The White House, "Obama's statement on the situation in Syria", (Washington, DC, August 18, 2011), http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/08/18/president-obama-future-syria-must-be-determined-its-people-president-bashar-al-assad (accessed October 5, 2013)
[16] United States. Department of State. Embassy of the United States, London. *Fact Sheet U.S. Government Assistance to Syria*, http://london.usembassy.gov/midest305.html, (accessed September 27, 2013)

In August 2013, it was determined that President al-Assad had used chemicals weapons on the people of Damascus. In previous speeches President Obama had commented that the "red line" for Syria would be the use of chemical weapons. It was now expected that the United States would have no other recourse but to launch an attack against the government of Syria.

On September 10, 2013, Obama addressed the nation in regards to the situation in Syria and outlined his plans to deal with the supposed chemical attack in Damascus. He stated, "It is in the national security interests of the United States to respond to the Asad regime's use of chemical weapons through a targeted military strike. The purpose of this strike would be to deter Asad from using chemical weapons, to degrade his regime's ability to use them, and to make clear to the world that we will not tolerate their use."[17] According to his address, Obama did not want to push for regime change at this point but wanted to make good on his promise that the U.S. will not tolerate any chemical weapons being used in any country. He goes on to say that by removing another dictator, the U.S. would end up in another situation like Iraq, and that would be unacceptable. Obama also ended his speech by asking the Congress to vote to endorse a military strike against Syria, if diplomacy failed.

President Obama was willing to unilaterally decide to implement a military strike in Syria to protect the national interest of the United States. This is prevalent of the realist ideology, because he was willing to assert U.S. power to extract cooperation from the al-Assad government. When the opportunity for diplomacy arose, he was willing to set aside the

[17] Barack Obama, "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Syria", (Speech, Washington, DC, September 10, 2013).

military strike. This showed a propensity towards an idealist worldview, because he was willing to step back and let the United Nations Security Council work on a diplomatic solution. Obama best describes his foreign policy towards Syria in his speech to the United Nations, "Without a credible military threat, the Security Council had demonstrated no inclination to act at all. However, as I've discussed with President Putin, my preference has always been a diplomatic resolution to this issue."[18] This diplomacy has led to the confiscation of several stockpiles of chemical weapons and has also allowed UN inspectors to begin disassembling the plants that created the chemical weapons.

Obama's presidency has been saddled with many different international issues, be it the removal of U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Syrian crisis that is unfolding daily. In each he has shown a propensity to change his ideology as the need arose. This is what makes him a truly postmodern president, because he blurs the lines of the realist and idealist ideology when it comes to his foreign policy, which may be his lasting legacy.

[18] Barack Obama, Address to the UN, (Speech, September 24, 2013) http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-09-24/politics/42340329_1_challenges-war-u-n-general-assembly (accessed September 27, 2013)

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to evaluate the foreign policies of the past five presidential administrations in an effort to detect a pattern to predict the future of U.S. foreign policy. To begin with, this paper focused on the primary international relations theories. The three main theories are idealism, realism and postmodernism.

Wilsonian idealism emerged as a response to the atrocities of World War I. Prior to the administration of Woodrow Wilson, the United States was isolationist in its foreign policy. In an effort to prevent a second world war, President Wilson developed "Fourteen Points," which outlined what the world needed to do maintain peace. A main theme was that the world needed to rely on multilateralism in resolving conflicts between countries. There could be no secret treaties; everything needed to be out in the open, and open for inspection. Under this framework the League of Nations was formed, and the era of collective security began. Wilson provided for collective security through Article 10 of the League Charter, which intended to protect the independence of member states that were threatened by meeting aggression with a coalition of nations. Ultimately, member states would have to put aside their own needs and interests to resolve conflicts. The main crux of idealist international relations lies in the idea of a global society that resolves conflicts multilaterally. Human beings are basically uniform, and the idea of sovereignty is what causes unnecessary wars. Idealism believes that there should be a natural harmony between all peoples and that a resolution to conflicts can be dealt with on a global scale.

This idealist era was short lived, as the international community soon faced World War II. The idea of collective security had failed, and the world was once more thrown into chaos.

Conclusion

In response to the destruction and atrocities of World War II, Hans Morgenthau wrote about the realist theory of international relations. Morgenthau lived in Germany during World War II and saw firsthand the struggle for survival of many people. He also relied on his own views about human nature to fashion a realist theory. In *Politics Among Nations,* Morgenthau discussed six key principles to understanding international relations; the most important of these six principles is that realism is the concept of interest defined in terms of power. The struggle for power provides the rationale for why nations behave the way they do. This power may be defined as a threat to a nation's border, or it may come as a buildup in armaments to deter an invasion. This realist theory depends on a rational view of human nature. The crux of realist ideology is that the world is in a state of anarchy in that everyone is sovereign; there should be no central authority. Being sovereign, these societies can only be considered as unitary actors, because their rationale is only in self-interest at the most and survival in the least.

Hans Morgenthau's theories were very influential on international relations through the 1980's. But as the world changed, so did theories on power and politics. Postmodernism began to emerge in the international relations field as another answer to the question of why nations behave the way they do. This "third debate" is an alternative to the idealist/realist stance in international relations. As with all postmodernist theory, there are no real guidelines, no parameters that define exactly what the third date is. This third debate began with the failure of realism to explain global phenomenon. The idea of the nation state as developed in the realist theory was no longer relevant as globalization blurred the boundary lines of the nation state. Postmodernist theory does take into account race, gender and ethnicity, and it

rejects the idea of a dominant ideology. The problem with the postmodernist theory is that it does not agree on much, but is rather just moving in circle, caught in a web of epistemology.

This thesis then examined the presidential administrations of the past 33 years, beginning with Ronald Reagan. His presidency occurred during the height of the Cold War. The primary focus of his foreign policy was to stop the spread of communism by any means necessary. Reagan began by bolstering the military and creating an environment of power politics, threatening to blanket Eastern Europe with a missile shield. The primary international relations theory associated with Ronald Reagan's foreign policy was realism. He believed that the world responded to threats and shows of force from the U.S. as a superpower. Reagan had less interest in spreading democracy than in stopping communism before it ended up at the border of the United States. His policies strictly adhered to the realist ideology in that he believed that the interests of the United States were the most important and he never would have resorted to consulting the international community on any of his decisions. Whereas idealists promote collective security, realists, like Ronald Reagan, would ensure that the United States would make every decision unilaterally. Also the fear of Communism was the driving factor behind Reagan's foreign policy; he would stop it by any means necessary.

President George H.W. Bush, who was vice-president under Ronald Reagan, developed quite a different stance in his foreign policy. Because communism was not the threat that it once was, his primary objective was to create a new world order. This new world order would involve the spread of democracy globally, according to the idealist principle that democracies tend not to fight other democracies. He also believed in a global community and sought collective security when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Consistent with his idealist principles, President

Bush worked multilaterally with the United Nations to drive the Iraqi army from Kuwait. Also, adhering to his idealist principles when it was called to pursue Saddam Hussein into Iraq and over throw him, Bush opted out. It was not the directive of the United Nations and as such he would not use unilateral force for Iraqi regime change.

Bill Clinton was the first president elected after Cold War. Because he was elected in a time of relative peace, he lacked any emphasis in foreign policy. During his first year as president, terrorists attacked the World Trade Center building. Yet he did not pursue those responsible. Primarily, Clinton subscribed to a more idealist approach to foreign policy, as his main focus was on globalization. He believed that the world was a borderless place, which if used correctly would promote economic prosperity. But in doing so he also promoted the idea that the U.S. would prefer to send troops on humanitarian missions rather than to use military power. When Clinton ordered the bombing of Iraq in Operation Desert Fox, it was not so much to exert power, but because Congress pressured him to do something about Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction. After the operation, Clinton reverted to advocating humanitarian policies, promoting a system of containment for Iraq and Iran, and ignoring threats from al Qaeda. By promoting these humanitarian missions, President Clinton did not have to make a foreign policy decision, which his indecisiveness showed.

George W. Bush seemed to favor continuing containment through sanctions as a foreign policy for Iraq and Iran. In the beginning of his presidency, he commented that the United States had grown weak in the international community and that the idealist policies of the previous administration had helped to bolster terrorism. President Bush promoted the realist

ideology of foreign policy by promoting the interest of the United States. He was willing to attack Afghanistan unilaterally had the United Nations' not supported the invasion. The president was not just avenging the terrorist attacks, he also wanted to remove the Taliban government and replace it with a democratic government. Bush believed that a free Afghanistan would restrict additional terrorists from attacking the United States. However, the invasion of Iraq was a different type of operation because it was not directly associated with the 9/11 attacks, and was a preventative measure. According to Bush, the U.S. had reached the time where it could no longer wait for an attack, but needed to prevent on by eliminating potential threats. This falls into the realist perspective through Thucydides theory that wars are created out of fear. The potential threat that President Bush spoke of was Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. Saddam had been evading the United Nations weapons inspectors for years and was playing a cat and mouse game under the international sanctions. This prompted President Bush to launch an attack on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power and replace him with a democratically elected government. This show of power was reminiscent of the realist theory.

Barack Obama came to power as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were winding down. There still remained a lot to be done; the show of power in Iraq and the deposing of Saddam Hussein did not quell the tensions in the Gulf. In his inaugural address he touted the need for the United States to engage the international community when an altercation is at hand. The president stressed the need for a more harmonious global society, which if governed by collective security, may ensure a lasting peace. W

Conclusion

While the U.S. was fighting to give the Iraqis a free society, the Taliban was retaking ground in Afghanistan. Obama believed that the war in Afghanistan was more important to the safety of Americans than the war in Iraq, so he decided to remove all of the remaining U.S. troops from Iraq. The president then focused his attention on Afghanistan, where he built up U.S. forces and pushed back the Taliban again. When President Obama pushed the troop surge in Afghanistan, it was without the approval of the international community. This action was more of a realist stance in that the idea was that it was best for American interests that the Taliban and al Qaeda be pushed back in that county. The latest example of the Obama administration is the handling of the Syrian crisis. Obama was willing to strike Syria unilaterally if the United Nations did not provide support in removing the chemical weapons from that country. When it seemed that diplomacy would be an option for resolving this crisis, Obama relented on the military intervention and let collective bargaining work.

Obama is truly a postmodern president, because he does not adhere to any one international relations theory over another. Obama has used whatever ideology that works for a given situation. He did promote democracy, but that was not a priority. He also declared that the U.S. would strike unilaterally to protect American lives, but Obama never embraced realism or any single international relations theory over another.

Each one of these presidents promised that they would be the architect of a new world order. This new world order would provide a lasting peace that would lead to stability and prosperity. A secondary goal of this thesis was to speculate about the future of foreign policy in the Persian Gulf in light of recent history. It is clear that after the Cold War, the U.S. needed to

change its approach to international relations. American foreign policy needs to be directed by American interests, but this interest struggles with clear-cut calculations. The dangers to the United States are not as straightforward as the communists versus the capitalists. There can never again be a simple idealist or realist approach to U.S. foreign policy. This thesis has suggested that having exclusively one or the other policy does not work in the Gulf region, leaving American foreign policy to navigate the gray area in between. National security directives cannot always address the problems the United States will most likely have with non-state actors and area regional conflicts. These things will threaten American as well as global security.

This thesis saw its conclusion in the foreign policy of President Obama. He has been adept at using these particular ideologies depending on the circumstances. In the United States, it is common for the realist theory to be associated with the Republican Party, while the idealist theory is associated with the Democratic Party. Having a policy that encompasses both may prove difficult when trying to design a coherent foreign policy objective. It is imperative that the United States stress the existence of harmony between all peoples, accepting that different people exhibit different behaviors and cultural norms. But on the other hand, if the United States is threatened, and its interests abroad are threatened, then the foreign policy initiative should reflect that. Also, if the U.S. is truly striving for peace, especially in the Persian Gulf, then there will be times when the conflict resolution of the idealists will be a better fit than the raw power of the realists. It would seem that democracy is not a good fit in the Persian Gulf as its success after implementation has not been very satisfactory. I believe that the future of foreign policy in the Persian Gulf will have to encompass an acknowledgment of

their religious culture and the need to be tolerant of their tribal culture as well. The United States will have deal with each country individually as they are all different, their only commonality being their region. While giving these countries the opportunity to survive with sovereignty, the United States cannot be compromised as it was on September 11, 2001, so if a threat is discovered it must be dealt with unilaterally.

This is the crux of the postmodernist theory: the need to erase the lines that divide realist and idealist, creating a new theory that combines the best of both. That, I believe, is the future of U.S. foreign policy in the Persian Gulf. By doing whatever is necessary to promote peace in the region while protecting American interest is at the heart of this foreign policy. Madeline Albright said in a commencement speech she gave at Harvard University in 1994, “We have a responsibility in our time, as other had in theirs, to be pathfinders; not to be imprisoned by history but to shape it; to build a world not without conflict but in which conflict is effectively contained; a world, not without repression but in which the sway of freedom is enlarged; a world not without lawless behavior but in which the law-abiding are progressively more secure."[1]

[1] Madeleine K. Albright, “Realism and idealism in American foreign policy today", (Commencement speech, Harvard University, Cambridge,), June 8, 1994.

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